



37417 Niles Blvd
Fremont, CA 94536




510-494-1411
www.nilesfilmmuseum.org

Scanned from the collections of
Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum

Coordinated by the
Media History Digital Library
www.mediahistoryproject.org

Funded by a donation from
Jeff Joseph



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Media History Digital Library

<http://archive.org/details/homecinema00lawr>

LARRY EDMUNDS
CINEMA BOOKSHOP INC.
HOLLYWOOD, CA. 90028
HO 8-3273

THE HOME CINEMA

THE HOME CINEMA

by

J. P. LAWRIE



CHAPMAN & HALL LTD.
LONDON

First Published

1933

CHAPMAN & HALL, LTD.

11 HENRIETTA ST.

LONDON, W.C.2

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY MACKAYS LIMITED, CHATHAM
BOUND BY A. W. BAIN & CO. LTD., LONDON

06-001-537

PREFACE

SOME of the figures given in this work will come as a surprise to many. The extraordinary interest given recently to the home cinema, despite economic depressions, will doubtless reduce the cost of practising this fascinating hobby—even now it is recorded that the normal purchaser of a cine camera is already the owner of a projector.

Of the several books published of late dealing with sub-standard cine work, the question of projecting, or screening, the picture is dismissed with the most casual of references, and in this work I have endeavoured to rectify this defect, and do trust that some of the 200,000 projector owners will find at least a few good hints and ideas upon the all-important subject of presentation. The conditions under which any film—amateur or professional—is seen will add or detract 50 per cent. to or from its entertainment and cinematic value.

Under scientific test 16-mm. film has a “life” of some 1,200 projections, and it is surely worth while to pay some little attention to an aspect of film showmanship which gives such increased pleasure and interest to both onlooker and the arranger.

What may be loosely termed as the second part of this book is devoted to ideas on film work. The time has come when crime and sex films of the Hollywood type must no longer be the sole product

of the amateur. If this course is persisted in, the hobby will fall into disuse.

Individuality of film play is the one saviour of the amateur, and by that I mean the real individuality which enables a man to think out his own plots and schemes for his film, not the inferior individuality that puts a few deft touches to another man's scenario and script.

The avowed object of this latter part, then, is to stimulate thought on the subject; hence the details of any ideas given are in such form that a certain amount of thought is needed to put them into practice. It is highly probable that the reader who sets out to do this will, before he has finished, have evolved an entirely new scheme subtly suggested in some obscure way by the original. To show this process, in the chapter detailing a game of chess and an old soldier, I have printed ideas as they occurred to me. I was asked, "Can you make a film about chess?" and the resulting and successful scenario was evolved.

Every example given is strictly practicable, may be attempted with confidence, and good films will result. Many of the ideas are printed in this country for the first time, and starting points for thought are given covering the whole field of amateur cinematography, even to the possibility of earning cash, and if every reader obtains from my work the germ of but one bright idea for either screening or making his films, I will be content.

J. P. LAWRIE.

ST. JOHN'S WOOD,
LONDON. 1933.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CERTAIN chapters in this work are based on the subject matter of articles which have appeared in the various photographic journals. The author extends his thanks for permission to reprint his work to the editors of *The Camera*, Dublin, *The Amateur Photographer*, London, and *Movie Makers*, New York, U.S.A.

Thanks are also due to Messrs. Columbia Graphophone Co., Messrs. Kodak Ltd., and the *Kinematograph Weekly* for permission to reprint extracts from their publications, and particularly to Messrs. Kodak Ltd. for the loan of the blocks needed to illustrate the cine gear mentioned in this work.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	v
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
I	APPARATUS	I
II	THE MAKING OF A CINEMA FILM	10
III	SCREENING THE FILM	13
IV	THE PUBLIC SHOW.	25
V	DECORATIONS. LIGHT AND COLOUR	32
VI	STAGE EFFECTS AND MUSIC	36
VII	AMATEUR FILMS	42
VIII	EXPOSURE. THE SCRIPT. MAKING THE MOVIE	49
IX	THE TITLE	57
X	EDITING	60
XI	THE PLOT AND SCENARIO	63
XII	WHAT TO FILM	72
XIII	OUT OF THE RUT	76
XIV	NOVELTY FILMS	81
XV	USE YOUR "STILL" CAMERA	87
XVI	AMATEUR TALKIES—AN IDEA	90
XVII	CUTTING THE COST OF FILMING	94
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	99
	INDEX	106

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
1. TWO CINE-" KODAKS "	3
2. COMPARISON OF SIZES OF FILM . . .	5
3. THE " KODASCOPE " MODEL C . . .	6
4. THE " KODATOY "	7
5. THE " SELF-RECTA " SCREEN	9
6. (a) THE " KODASCOPE " RAPID SPLICER AND REWIND	60
(b) THE SAME ENLARGED	60
(c) THE CINE-KODAK TITLER	60
7. TAKING PICTURES INDOORS	85

“And with the shadowy picture fills his mind.”
—*Virgil.*

CHAPTER I

APPARATUS

As indicated in the Preface, this book, whilst covering the general field of amateur cinematography, pays some little consideration to the needs of owners of projectors only. Since, however, it is felt that many of these latter will ultimately become owners of sub-standard cine cameras—for the acquisition of a projector is the normal first step—a very short section of the work is devoted to a résumé of the essential apparatus needed for the complete art of cinematography.

No details are given as to the operation and use of these instruments, the prospective owner of one, or all, is very strongly advised to have a heart-to-heart chat with the ever-friendly salesman at his local dealers, the question of initial cost and suitability can then be threshed out thoroughly. Pointers as to the distribution of cost for those intending to acquire the main outfits are given later.

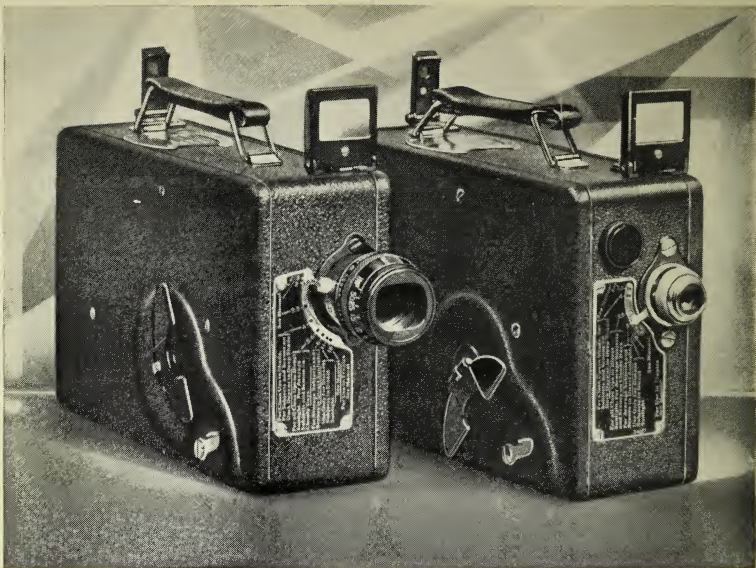
The prospective or actual purchaser will do well to study the literature normally enclosed in the

box containing the camera or whatever gear is bought. (Further mention of any projector or camera in these pages will presuppose a working knowledge, at least, of their functions.) The illustrations are by no means intended to be indicative of the entire range of gear obtainable, but have been selected as being representative of all such goods and are of the medium class which can be purchased.

The Cine Camera

Cine cameras are obtainable, of both British and foreign manufacture, in two sizes: 16-millimetre and 9.5-millimetre widths. The 16-mm. film has perforations each side, whilst the 9.5-mm. has a single perforation in the centre of the film and between the "frames" or pictures. The former film is of the "reversing" type like the 9.5-mm. Also the direct negative type, which needs a positive copy printed from it. The smaller size, of course, renders it slightly more economical to run. At present, colour cine work is limited to users of 16-mm. film.

Messrs. Kodak have, in America, recently placed upon the market a new-size cine camera and projector, namely, the 8-mm. The camera and projector are sold together and, by the time this book is in the readers' hands, one presumes that this outfit will have been introduced to England. This new-sized camera is very interesting in that it uses the normal 16-mm. film in 25-foot lengths,



1.—TWO CINE-“ KODAKS ” : Each holds a 50-ft. roll of 16-mm. film. The Camera on the left is fitted with an $f1.9$ lens, whereas the other has an $f3.5$ lens.

but exposes only half the width and depth at a time. When the film is run through, the spool is turned round in the camera, which is arranged so that mistakes cannot easily be made, and the other half of the film then exposed. This film has just double the perforations of the usual 16-mm. size, and during the processing (development) of the film, it is slit into two lengths which are joined together, thus forming a 50-foot reel which, since but one-quarter of the space is needed for each individual frame, has a running time equal to that of 100 feet of 16-mm. film. Prices have not yet been announced, but there is no doubt that a great economy of initial and running costs will be brought about. The projector is described in the appropriate section.

As in every purchase, it is advantageous to obtain the best that one can afford, the increased efficiency and consequent reduction of film costs—especially in the early stages—will more than compensate for the extra outlay.

From time to time extremely cheap "Cine Cameras" appear on the market. At the time of writing a 9.5-mm. instrument is being sold at 32s. and this marvel can be used both as camera and projector! Such apparatus is, however, normally doomed to a brief and inglorious career, and the amateur will be well advised to concentrate upon the well-known and old-established makers. A further point is that should it ever be desired to dispose of cinematographic gear, that bearing a famous name will naturally always command a

fair price. This obvious fact is frequently overlooked when the initial purchase is made.

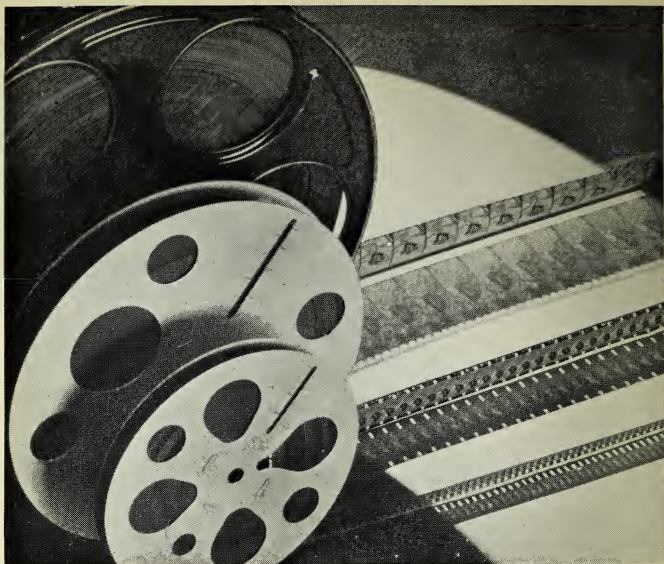
Prices range, in the reputable field, from fifty shillings (in the 9.5-mm. size) up to many tens of pounds for the "super" variety in both 9.5 and 16 mm. If purchase of camera and projector is contemplated, it is as well to spread the cost over both—the film taken by a decent camera deserves, and is shown at its best by, a good projector. An inferior projector will nullify a lot of the advantage gained by using a well-lensed camera. This point will not be unduly stressed by the average dealer, but is none the less worthy of consideration.

Tripod Stand

It is hardly necessary to illustrate a tripod suitable for the cine camera. This can be a simple stand as used for the ordinary still camera and costing but a few shillings, or the more elaborate stand especially evolved for serious work, which costs around £10 and has many movements for "panning" and "tilting," etc. Here again, the policy of obtaining the best that one's means will permit is indicated.

Film

The illustrations show typical examples of 35-mm. of 16-mm. and 8-mm. film. Sixteen-mm. reversing film is sold in varying lengths, the usual standards being 30 feet, 50 feet and 100 feet. The price, in



2.—This picture compares the sizes of the Standard film (35 mm. as used in cinemas) and the 16-mm. and new 8-mm. Cine-Kodak films. It can be seen that the 8-mm. film has only one row of perforations.

the case of reversing film, includes processing and return postage.

Of the non-reversing type can be claimed greater economy should any film be damaged or spoilt. The advantage lies in the fact that the film can be edited and any spoilt patches or unsuitable scenes omitted from the positive ultimately made. The price of the positive print is thus reduced, as is the cost of any reprints subsequently desired.

Apart from the above considerations there is little to choose between reversal and negative stock—both are very capable of giving perfect results if the operator is master of his camera.

Although there are several brands of 9.5-mm. non-reversal film on the market, the majority sold is of the reversing type and is marketed in 30-foot and 60-foot spools. An additional charge is made for processing the negative film. As mentioned elsewhere, the new 8-mm. camera uses a 25-foot spool of a specially perforated 16-mm. film of the reversal type.

Projectors

The range of these instruments of precision is as great as that of cameras. Bearing in mind the pointer given in the paragraph on cine cameras, it is as well to get the best one can, from the point of wearing quality, size of projected picture, silence in running, etc. A 9.5-mm. projector, excellent of its class, may be obtained for as little as 55s., and the lowest price of a reputable make of 16-mm.

projector is £3 3s. (which price includes a screen and a 100-foot spool). Senior grades in both sizes are obtainable at varying prices up to, in the case of 16-mm., over £100. The price of the 8-mm. models are not yet announced, but will presumably be under that of 16 mm. It is understood that they will be sold with the cameras as a complete outfit. An excellent projector for home use is available at £6 6s. for 9·5 mm. and at £18 18s. for the 16-mm. size.

Whatever size or make be purchased, it cannot be too strongly emphasised that, to get the best results, study and application of the instructions given with the machine are essential. If funds will permit, and the necessary space is available, it is desirable to obtain a stand for the projector. Whilst in a way a luxury, it is certainly useful not to have to shift the table every time it is desired to screen a film, and for a public or semi-public showing a stand of some description is a necessity. Prices range from 30s. upwards.

Screen

A great deal has been, and will be, written about cine screens. Far too many amateurs economise on this adjunct and press a white sheet into service. Others, of the handyman type, manufacture their own with the aid of three-ply and aluminium paint. By far the best method is to buy one—the increased brilliance of its perfect surface will render it a wise investment. Prices range from 9s. 6d. to £10.



3.—THE "KODASCOPE" MODEL C : This projector shows a picture 40" x 30" and takes a 400-ft. reel of 16-mm. film—sufficient to last about 16 minutes. It is solidly yet compactly built.



4.—THE "KODATOY": A complete 16-mm. projector. It is simple, safe and inexpensive and is specially designed for the use of children. The "silvered" theatre screen behind the projector gives an 11" x 8½" picture.

Rewinder

This useful apparatus, duly illustrated, need not concern the owner of a projector only. Those intending to make their films as good as is possible will find the rewinder practically indispensable for the general editing of their pictures. With the rewinder is usually coupled the "Film Splicer," which is essential for the proper and efficient joining of the film during editing or for repairing a broken film during projection.

Lighting Units

For the maker of indoor or studio films, a few of these units are indispensable to secure the proper values of light and shade in his film. Prices range from £3 3s. upwards, and a great variety of shapes and sizes are manufactured.

Care of Apparatus

It remains but to emphasise again the necessity of giving due consideration to the instructions issued by the makers with each apparatus. Hints on getting the best possible results and the best methods of care and maintenance are given, and these should be carried out fully to ensure freedom from trouble whilst in use.

There is, then, little excuse for the amateur who fails to acquire a knowledge of the workings of his acquisitions. Should the camera be a second-hand purchase, a line to the manufacturers will speedily bring a copy of the booklet. This being so, and the race of photographic dealers being so

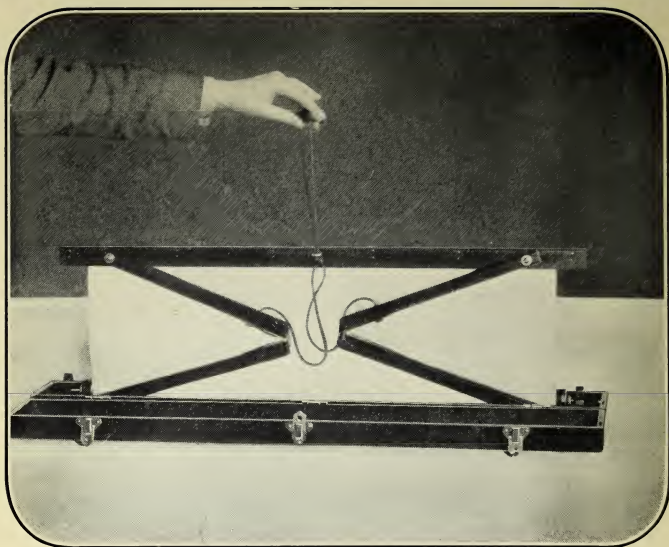
courteous, it is somewhat surprising to find that very few cine workers have much idea as to how their camera works. Possibly this is due to an excess of pressing the button and letting others do the rest. Here is a true story.

Some time ago a steamship line ran a rather unusual cruise. An intelligent young man curried favour with a photographic firm and was more or less commissioned to go on the tour with a promise of reward for his films of foreign lands, with a prospect of a series of such tours to cover.

All went well until the third spool was in process of being shot, the ship then being some days at sea. The camera jammed and ceased to function despite all efforts to make it do so. Naturally the tour proceeded—it was impossible to obtain another camera or have it repaired—and in several weeks the young man sorrowfully reported in London, bearing the jammed camera. He told his tale, the instrument was examined, a slight adjustment made, and it functioned perfectly!

And the result? No remuneration for the films not taken, general disappointment, and loss of the following tours.

A similar mishap to an amateur whilst on holiday can usually be rectified at a dealer's locally or, if touring in the more or less wilds, the consequences, beyond disappointment, are not so very dire, consisting as they do of lack of pictures and a pile of unused films representing a capital outlay which, apart from holiday needs, would normally spread out over some little time. So it becomes



5.—THE "SELF-RECTA" SCREEN : A compact " silvered " projection screen which is practically self-erecting. You simply grip the leather handle, lift up and the screen comes into position.

obvious that it is really a prime necessity to know one's camera. This is not to indicate a constant tampering with its internals—far from it—but an appreciation of the basic principles is certainly helpful.

CHAPTER II

THE MAKING OF A CINEMA FILM

THE following information, whilst not of direct use to the amateur, is given in accordance with the writer's belief that everything possible about an undertaking should be known, and the manufacture of film base has not, for some reason, been discussed in any other work of this nature.

Most cinema-goers, by virtue of amateur photography and the many articles which have appeared in the Press, are familiar with the methods by which a picture is filmed, developed and projected. Few, however, can claim knowledge as to how the film itself—the virgin unexposed film—is made, and it is here endeavoured to convey to them an idea of the highly technical processes entailed.

In the first place the base has to be made. This is done by the scientific treatment of cellulose with nitric acid (*aqua fortis*) and many other chemicals, but the acid is the principal factor. The product of this treatment, a very inflammable substance closely allied to guncotton, is known as cellulose nitrate. It has mixed with it, among other ingredients, a proportion of oil and camphor. This mixture, sent out under the name of "dope,"

is further treated, and rolled by special machinery into long flat sheets, 40 inches wide and 2,000 feet in length.

It is then rolled on to spools and constitutes the film "base." The next step is to coat this base with photographic emulsion, of which, since each firm has its own secret formula, it is impossible to say much, beyond that the emulsion consists of a gelatine suspension of silver bromide and other chemical salts. It is the addition of varying quantities of these salts that renders a film fast or slow, sensitive to some colours, or not. Dyes also are used to give the emulsion greater sensitivity.

The base then is carefully coated with the emulsion, the very exact machines ensuring a level deposit of the emulsion over its whole length. As the coating proceeds the film is passed through warm air which dries it, and it is rewound on to the spool.

After examination for possible defects the coated film is slit into widths of 35 millimetres (the width of the standard professional film). About 28 such widths can be slit, so it will be seen that in the coating process some 56,000 feet of cinema film is handled at a time.

After slitting, the film is spooled off in tins of 1,000 feet and taken to the perforating machines. These are responsible for the perforations on each edge of the film. It is highly important that these perforations are exact in their distance, since it is by means of them that the film is threaded and drawn through both the camera in the studio and

the projector at the cinema. Uneven or worn sprocket holes are the cause of the picture on the screen jumping or flickering.

The perforating over, the film is loaded into special boxes ready for the camera. The picture is shot and the negative is developed. This is then printed again on another length of film which gives the positive, thus giving the blacks and whites as they should be. (They are, of course, reversed in the negative.) After titling and editing, the film is now ready for the cinema.

Most of the home cinema films (16 mm.) which are, of course, manufactured in the same way excepting that the width and perforation spacing differ, do not have this positive copy made, but are subjected to a reversal process which turns the negative into a positive copy—an economical process, though to obtain additional copies of the film it becomes necessary to duplicate by reversal; this, however, is seldom needed in amateur work.

All home cine film is made of acetate base, and is thus practically non-inflammable.

CHAPTER III

SCREENING THE FILM

I

It has been authoritatively told the writer that the production, by the largest cine gear manufacturers in the world, of projectors and cameras is in the ratio of *six* to *one*. In a recent issue of the film trade journal *The Cinema*, it has been stated that, at a conservative estimate, "over 200,000 projectors will be at work this season (1932)."

This figure gives a good idea of the ever-increasing interest in the home cinema, and forms the author's reason for placing his ideas of screening the picture in the forefront of the book, although a lot will be said later on the subject of film taking and making.

In these days of talkies at all cinemas, the small village "flea pit" can, providing that it has adequate talkie apparatus, give as excellent a show as its West End brother. But as yet, the amateur is not concerned with talking pictures and must recapture the art of the almost (professionally) extinct silent film. In the old days, to view a silent film at a West End cinema, with its stage prologue and excellent orchestra and fine projection, and

then compare it at a small country hall, the film badly scratched and flickering, no prologue and an "orchestra" of one out-of-tune piano, was to have brought vividly home the art of film presentation. It is not suggested that the amateur can go to professional standards, nor is it entirely desirable to professionalise what is essentially an amateur art but, as the following pages show, a whole lot can be gained to the amateurs' betterment. The following remarks apply with equal force to those who actually make their own films, and to those who merely project "library" or hired films.

II

The main trouble with amateur productions is that they *are* amateur. A certain garishness and crudeness will be apparent in all but few productions, more particularly in the first films, despite the most frantic efforts of those responsible.

However tolerant your audience intends to be, it will almost unconsciously contrast your show with that of the professional at the local cinema. In addition to this handicap, you have the fact that, particularly during the first few showings, many relatives of the director and cast, etc., will be present. These relatives are in no way convinced that the show can be interesting other than on this score. As to whether they are right will be for the producer and directors to decide—they made the film.

Much of this "amateurishness" can be covered by efficient screening of the picture. We will take it that everything is absolutely ready for the *première* showing. On no account should those responsible permit any members of the cast or production to see any pre-views that may be necessary for titling, music fitting, or general rehearsal. This is most important. Other than those actually concerned—keep everyone in the dark as to what the film is like in its finished state. The interest of all, actors and audience, is sustained by such action, drastic though it may be considered, and general anticipation is heightened as a result.

We shall see how during the filming the giving of a job to everyone will tremendously help the success and enthusiasm of the show. Continue the idea! Here are a few more jobs which the executives of the production must fill with capable helpers—preferably those who had least to do during the filming of the story.

Cinema Manager.—His duty is to see that all entitled are duly posted with details of the show, and to attend the lighting of the room.

Orchestra.—Probably the musical director will take this post. Either piano, pick-up or gramophone needed for this.

Projectionist.—Should be no difficulty here.

Effectsman.—This needs careful consideration of the picture. Does it need them?

Handyman.—To rig up curtains, etc.

Other jobs may be thought of, dependent, perhaps, on local conditions. With these and other details settled next decide upon fixed and definite nights for rehearsals, preferably in the place where the ultimate screening will occur. Secure the best place possible, even if it means hiring a small hall for a few shillings; you have already spent some pounds on the production, so bear in mind the old adage about the ship and the tar!

At the first rehearsal explain to the men selected for the tasks mentioned just what they are to do, and let them do it entirely on their own. This is the real secret of success in both amateur and professional undertakings—let the people appointed do the job with as little interference or guidance as possible from the executives.

Hints will be given as to ways and means for each task, it being understood, of course, that local environment may need some change in the suggested method of presentation. For the sake of clarity each task will be detailed individually, and the outline sketched so that it can easily be fitted to local requirements.

A final word, fix as many rehearsal dates as possible. You are showing a silent film: bear in mind that in a West End cinema a silent film would have had some dozen or more rehearsals before presentation to the public. If a highly-polished professional film needs such care, how much extra attention must be given the amateur production!

III

You are gathering together for the first rehearsal. Instruct the projectionist to bring some three or four hundred feet of another film with him. (This is to save unnecessary wear of your own production.) Remember, you are due to rehearse and arrange the screening of your film, not to talk of other subjects. Save all that for the cup of coffee afterwards, get on with the job in hand and take it seriously, or give it up and show the film anywhere and anyhow !

Firstly, the projectionist shall hold sway. He will choose the best positions for both projector and screen. If at all possible, he should have the screen in one corner and the projector in another ; this gives him the longer throw and, what is most important, a corner on his own, easy to keep free of people jostling around. Once this position is decided upon, stick to it and use it throughout.

The spare film will be used to determine the exact position of his gear, etc. If it is necessary to shift the apparatus between rehearsals always use the old film to fix the spot and for focussing. With, say, six rehearsals the saving in wear and tear on the main film is considerable.

The projectionist will also report to the cinema manager the exact time it takes for the film to run through, change-overs being made at a standard time. Do the change-overs in an unhurried way so that the others working on the presentation

know just how long to allow for them. Even if ready to start the next reel in, say, five seconds, let the appointed time elapse before screening.

We now come to the cinema handyman. His primary job is to rig up a curtain for the screen. In a West End cinema the audience is not allowed to gaze upon a naked and bare screen: let this principle be followed in your case. A feminine member of the group can easily make the curtain, and the handyman can fix it so that the simple pulling of a string will cover or uncover the screen.

His next task is that of hiding the orchestral department. If, as suggested, the screen cuts across a corner, the simple stretching of a curtain under this will do. Anyway, keep the orchestra, be it piano or gramophone, well out of sight. If at all possible screen off the projectionist as well, the corner site makes this easy. After all, the audience will be present to see the picture, *not* the orchestra or projection apparatus!

This leads us to the music department, which will depend upon facilities available. Have a piano, piano and violins, or gramophones. Get, if possible, two gramophones of the same kind or, better still, machines with electric "pick-ups." In all cases remember that it is not needed of this department to fill a large theatre. Keep the volume of the instrument down.

If the setting has been carried out during the shooting of the film, several rehearsals will soon fit and perfect the musical arrangements. If

records are used, let them be carefully numbered and in order. Work with a stop-watch, remember that the projection will always be at a certain speed, so ignore the progress of the film and work strictly to time, making your change-over of records when your self-made cue sheet indicates. Do not watch the film at all after the first few rehearsals. Your job is music. See to it that it is up to and does not fail the level of the projection: you are both working to time. Keep the music going whilst the change-overs are made to other reels.

Keep a record handy which you can put on should a breakdown occur. When the defect is rectified, get back to your cue sheet and timing as soon as possible, for upon the musical department, apart from its ability to cover up any breakdowns, rests a heavy responsibility for the success of the entire show.

IV

By this time all concerned will have realised that screening the film is rather more of a task than they imagined. In fact, it is possible that they will even grow a little weary of seeing the film—let them take heart, however, for their reward will be great on the night of the show. Whoever experiences the joy of “first night” excitement does not easily forget it!

Effects-men, or “noises off.” If it is decided to have this adjunct to the film, and they should

be used only if the film requires them, it is essential that the operators be well rehearsed for every sound. They should work in company with the musical director, who will, if the effect is good, decrease the music and give the noise a chance to get over, or conversely, increase the volume of music if the effect is poor.

Apparatus for making "noises off." A little ingenuity on the operator's part, plus the help of the handyman, will soon get the needed gear assembled. Let the effectsman watch the picture carefully and, like the musical department, realise that he is not working in a large theatre. Suggest, rather than imitate the noises; for instance, sandpaper rubbed against sandpaper in an open room, sounds just what it is, but in the darkened atmosphere of the cinema with a picture of the sea on the screen the ears of the audience translate it into the sound of the sea.

A warning given here is for the benefit of the executive people concerned. If, after several rehearsals, the effects do not sound good and are not properly synchronised with the action of the film, *cut them right out*—even at the risk of offending the operator of the noises. If the rest of your show is perfect, one bad effect will ruin it, one badly-timed noise will make your audience laugh.

Finally, we have the cinema manager. His duties are multifarious. He will, as rehearsals proceed and the *première* comes due, notify the audience of the actual date and time. He will

arrange the seating and act as liaison officer between music and projection. He will be in special control of lighting and will see to it that the light in the room is fairly dull—the screened film will seem brighter in consequence.

Graduate the lights outside so that on leaving the meeting-room where the audience will congregate, the eyes are subjected to a gradual lessening of light. A simple replacement of light bulbs will effect this matter.

The manager will supervise the entire starting of the show. In the final “dress rehearsals” let him take full command, having projectionist, effects and musician ready. Give the pre-arranged signal and start the show. He will time it and point out any faults or defects in the arrangements, comment on the volume of music and noises, and run the show right through until everything is settled and fixed, particularly the timing.

Now everything is ready for the *première* the curiosity and interest of people excluded during preparations will be at high pitch. Say nothing as to the progress of rehearsals, keep any little surprises in music or noises from becoming public property. Make the whole thing as professional as is possible, the routine will harm no one, but will prove invaluable for future occasions.

In concluding, the actual screening will be discussed. Remember, it is late now to change any items. Stick to what you have practised, better an average idea well carried out than a bright idea or scheme badly done!

v

The great day has arrived! A curious and excited audience will have assembled in the house and will be itching to enter the temporary theatre, which, however, will be barred to all until the stated time of the show.

Four or five minutes before the show is due to start, and *not* before, open the theatre door, this being the cue for the music department to function with an item specially selected for the purpose. As this item ends on a loud climax, the manager will put out the theatre lights and the music will start on the overture proper. Careful timing enables the projectionist to throw his picture on the covered screen, the curtain of which is opened as the first title appears.

Simultaneously the music commences its set programme, and from now on, until the end of the film, all should go well. As each reel ends, the curtain is drawn over the screen and the music increases in volume to overcome any tendency of the audience to talk and spoil the atmospheric effect of the film.

When the picture is ended, raise the lights as the orchestra puts over another selected piece. Unless there are other films to be screened get the audience out of the theatre and let them discuss the show in another room. The few minutes' grace before the film started will have enabled them to get an idea of your arrangements. Closer

acquaintance may expose any little makeshift and spoil the general effect.

Such is the general outline of the proper and fit presentation of your film. You will have spent much time and money upon the production, be fair to it, and give it a good presentation.

It will be obvious that the proceedings outlined are open to many improvements dependent entirely upon local circumstances and the facilities available. The screen could be decorated with flowers, ferns, etc., or the film may lend itself to the staging of a short spoken prologue of some description. Whatever may be attempted, let it be well done; do not let down the whole production by inefficiency in any one branch. If necessary, take the bold step of postponing the whole show until everything and everyone is perfect—this has been done many times professionally, so don't hesitate to do so if needed!

There is no reason, when all this is done, why the film should not be exhibited at a local hall in aid of the local charity. A small charge could be made to defray expenses and provide the reason for the show. The advisability of doing this, however, will rest with the executives, who will know if the film is suitable for such purposes.

In any case, interesting and well-presented films are at a premium among amateurs, and much enjoyment can be obtained by exhibiting one's film at another amateurs' meeting.

Your task is simplified for the next film you produce. Stick to the same methods on the whole,

but change the personnel if possible. Keep everyone happily engaged upon some task or the other, however simple, and they will work well and be content. Let each man with a job to do, do it on his own as far as is possible, and, above all, rehearse your shows. Rehearse them until all is perfect, and you will soon reach the state of always knowing the best way of screening the completed picture !

CHAPTER IV

THE PUBLIC SHOW

I

As has been suggested, it may be desirable for the benefit of club funds or a pet charity to give a public screening of a film. The usual home gear will not, normally, be of service in this respect and it will be necessary to obtain a more powerful projector. A public showing of a 16-mm. or other sub-standard film has, until recently, been considered impracticable. Improvements in projection apparatus have so progressed that it is now quite possible to give a film show to a very large audience, a semi-professional *talking* film has been demonstrated in a theatre seating 2,500 people. Both illumination of the picture (a 90-foot throw) and the sound were stated to be adequate.

The Southport Amateur Cine Society showed their film "Intrigue" to the public at the Southport Picturedrome. No less than 4,400 people paid for admission during the film's three-day run. A 200-watt lamp will give a 7-foot, whilst a new 100-volt 400-watt lamp is stated to give a 16-foot picture.

In this respect it is interesting to mention that,

experimentally, a 16-mm. machine has been used with a small arc as illuminant, and a good 10-foot picture obtained. Additionally it is claimed that a picture (from 16-mm. film) 14 feet wide can be obtained at a distance of 80 feet.

Thus it is obvious that a public showing has become a definite proposition for the amateur, who is referred to the section on the use of the still camera for details of gaining publicity, etc., which are amplified in the following section. The excellent results gained by the Southport amateurs should prove both stimulating and incentive to those desirous of embarking upon such a venture.

II

For the purpose of boosting a cine club generally, raising the cash balance and providing a new outlet for the energy and enthusiasm of club members, nothing can beat giving a show of selected films to the general public.

Against these advantages must be counted the fact that a terrific amount of spade work is necessary in the preliminary organising and a certain amount of capital must be expended (not much, but most clubs are hard up!) and the question of regaining this outlay plus extra for the funds, whilst being very high, is due to caprice on the part of the public, or to national or local affairs predominating the interest, always liable to be open. The first step therefore, in giving a public show is to ascertain

whether the club can stand the outlay should the show be a total frost. It won't be, of course, but the point of a possible loss must not be overlooked.

If it has been decided to hold the show, step number two is to obtain the regulations relating to such exhibitions. There are many of these items, some national (but the fact of using non-flam. film annuls most), and a myriad of local rules, etc. A visit to the local police station will put all such knowledge in your hands. *This is essential, and must be done.* Space, and the fact that local regulations are so very diverse, will not permit of a detailed outline of them in this article. The visit to the police station will also clear up any doubts as to the legality of giving a show in any particular hall.

The regulations, rules and legality details having been settled, step three leads us to the choice of an exhibition hall. Rent is rather apt to rule here and, bearing in mind the maximum sum allotted for this purpose, choice should be made of a hall in the most central spot obtainable. Get it as large as will be consistent with the maximum screen size you can give. In any case, avoid halls which may be cheaper, but are usually hidden in obscure back streets. Aim for places such as are normally to be found over the public baths, museums, churches, etc. Careful inspection of the hall must be made, and measurements taken as a guide to length of throw for the projectors. Enquiries about decorations and seating should be

made at the time, the fees of some halls do not include these items. Should your locality boast a "little" theatre (and the movement is very strong just now), which happens to be vacant when you need a hall, do your best to book it, the regular patrons offer you a good potential audience.

The hall and its booking being settled, we next deal with the question of publicity, the fourth of our steps. This may seem not quite the place to discuss the matter, the programme not yet being settled, but it is never too early to start the job of informing your public. Bear in mind that there are many attractions other than yours for the nimble shillings! A notice, hand-drawn if you will, just giving the date and that such and such a film show will be held, should be displayed at the hall the day the booking is made. A twelve-word announcement in the agony column of the local paper costs but two shillings for three insertions, is productive of interest and enables you more freely to approach the editor later.

III

When the programme is settled, obtain a supply of "stills" indicative of the high spots of the films to be shown and arrange them tastefully, with descriptive wording, on a poster board. Have this displayed at the hall, the patrons of other events, such as dances, meetings and lectures, will see them. Stills, and a short note of the films,

titles, time and place of showing, price of admission, etc., will often be displayed free of charge by shopmen, and such aid is invaluable. A further selection of stills, together with all details of the films, story, cast and production should be sent to the editor of the local paper, and a slightly larger advertisement booked for his issue just prior to your screening. Posters cost but a few shillings a dozen, and this expenditure at the printer's is well worth while. The printer can easily arrange for them to be posted about the district, and if funds are available, for a sandwich-man to patrol the main streets the day of the show. "Give-away-bills," too, are cheap and have much pulling power. All club members should be supplied with these and also given at least one poster to get displayed. In this latter respect do not fail, if difficulty is met, to offer the shopkeeper a couple of free seats—that often gets the poster on display!

No apology is made for dwelling at some length on this aspect of the public show, for it is on publicity, which you must obtain by fair means or foul, that the success of your show relies. Go all out on this point, and impress every member of the club with his duty in this respect.

Step number five is the programme. This, of course, needs but a little judicious selection of nature, interest or comedy films to pad around the main items on the bill. If you have a recent local "Topical News" item in your repertoire, do not fail to include it. A suggested programme is as follows:—Local news item. Comedy. Local

or foreign scenic. Interval. (Stage turn?) Main films. If the club does not possess any of the needed items, they are easily hired at a moderate fee.

If it is decided to import talent by way of a vocalist or instrumentalist to function in the interval, see to it that they are good—avoid any amateurishness in this item. A piano is normally available in the hall for accompanying the artist, but a gramophone, preferably with an electric pick-up, is desirable for the musical setting of the pictures. An amateur orchestra made up of club members and supporters, unless exceptional, is a very doubtful proposition.

Projection. If the club or available projector is not able to give a large enough picture, hire a more powerful machine from a dealer; the extra cost will be more than met by the increased seating made possible. Arrange the seating in the hall, placing a gangway, if possible, in line with the flare spot. Leave a decent amount of room for the knees between the rows. Club members can act as ushers, and a limited number of seats should be numbered and reserved for the advance bookers. Also a number of seats equivalent to the free tickets issued should be allocated. These may be sold if not taken up sharp on time, but state this when you give them.

Have details of the club posted up in various spots of the hall to attract attention. Printed programmes, to give away gratis, can be productive of profit if one or two advertisements are canvassed

—the local photographic dealer is almost certain to support it, and may even be willing to stage an exhibition of cine gear in the vestibule in exchange for the loan of a projector to you.

The sale of chocolates, cigarettes, tea and coffee, etc., during the interval will usually add to the general takings. Running a children's matinee at reduced prices will invariably produce a good attendance with its consequent reflection in the box office takings. If, on the whole, your main film is not quite suitable for a children's show—obtain one that is. The profit accruing will offset the expense of hiring. Many other schemes and ideas will come to mind during the time of preparation. Do not hesitate to put them into operation—everything helps to pull the paying public to your doors—even a poster on the back of the secretary's car!

Far from being expensive to stage, no more than three or four pounds need be ventured if club members pull their weight and assist in every way. With fair publicity and luck, a very substantial profit should be made, the club membership increased and confidence and experience gained for the next public show. If your show is successful the Press reports will help your next enormously, and you will have the advantage of a ready-made, favourably disposed audience to draw upon.

CHAPTER V

DECORATIONS. LIGHT AND COLOUR

THE preceding chapters have given, in fair detail, the routine best operated for screening pictures. There are three very necessary constants which must be arrived at in projection :

1. Good definition.
2. Luminosity.
3. Steadiness and absence of flicker.

If these items are consistently maintained during the whole show the amateur will have little to worry about so far as projection is concerned, the rest—as has been said—will depend upon his film, his presentation and the comfort of his seating arrangements.

It will be obvious that the suggested method of screening a picture can be elaborated to almost any degree and extent so far as screen decorations and curtains, etc., are effected. Over-elaboration, however, is very easily committed and should be guarded against. The screen hangings and curtains if possible should tone in to some extent with the general scheme of decorations in the room or hall. Naturally, dark colours are rather

essential in the immediate vicinity of the screen itself (the writer *has* seen one in a gilt frame!) and if ferns and plants are used to create an artistic effect, care must be taken to ensure that they do not obstruct the view from any part of the seating accommodation.

Any devotee of the stage or cinema is aware that lighting plays a very important part in the general scheme of presentation. Colour lighting the screen and its surrounds during the showing of opening titles and subsequent captions forms a delightful and interesting method of enhancing the effectiveness of a presentation, and gives great scope for artistic ability in interpreting both film and incidental music in terms of light.

To arrange one or more spotlights, or even a row of footlights, with a scheme for altering the colours, presents no difficulty to anyone even slightly versed in electricity. It is safe to state that a man capable of operating a projector can fix up, and use, a spotlight utilising coloured gelatine to obtain his tints and colours.

Lighting effects can also be brought into play during the overture or when the screen is covered for a change-over of film reels. Readers of the musical suggestions for professional films, as given by Mr. A. W. Owen in the *Kinematograph Weekly*, will note that very careful consideration is given this point. A light yellow colour is definitely *not* indicated during the playing of a selection of Wagner!

The variety of effects to be obtained by careful

lighting is now recognised professionally as of the greatest importance, and the following list of light and colour effects (reprinted from the *Kinematograph Weekly*) should be carefully studied and referred to for operation.

LIGHT AND COLOUR EFFECTS
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES

Natural Colour of Article.	Red.	Orange.	Yellow.	Green.	Blue.	Violet.
----------------------------	------	---------	---------	--------	-------	---------

RESULTANT COLOUR APPEARANCE.

Black	Reddish Black	Orange Black	Yellow Black	Greenish Black	Blue Black	Violet Black
Red	Red	Scarlet	Orange	Brown	Purple	Reddish Purple
Orange	Orange Red	Orange	Orange Yellow	Greenish Yellow	Violet Brown	Red
Yellow	Orange	Yellow Orange	Yellow	Yellowish Green	Green	Reddish Brown
Light Green	Reddish Grey	Yellow Green	Greenish Yellow	Green	Blue Green	Light Purple
Deep Green	Reddish Grey	Rusty Brown	Yellowish Green	Green	Greenish Blue	Green Purple
Light Blue	Violet	Slate Grey	Yellowish Grey	Greenish Blue	Blue	Violet Blue
Deep Blue	Purple	Bluish Grey	Slate	Blue Green	Blue	Blue Violet
Violet	Purple	Red Purple	Violet Grey	Blue	Violet Blue	Violet
White	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Violet

CHAPTER VI

STAGE EFFECTS AND MUSIC

ENOUGH has been said in the previous pages to indicate that the successful presentation of a film needs careful consideration given its incidental and accompanying music. One of the greatest joys of film showing lies in the choice and selection of this music—it gives as much scope almost as making the original film itself. In the days of the silent cinema, the showing of a film at a West End house would be preceded by many rehearsals of the film with the orchestra in order that the musical director could effect his fitting of music and time his change-overs satisfactorily.

The amateur musical director has this great advantage—he usually assists in the actual preparation of the film, and can thus start his cue sheet from the very beginning. Professionally, in the old days, the film stars normally acted to the sound of an orchestra playing music suited to the scene being enacted. This gave them a certain atmosphere and materially assisted their portrayal of character, etc.

This scheme can be adopted by amateurs with the greatest of benefits, and a splendid opportunity

thus occurs for the amateur M.D. to prepare a cue sheet and try out his music as the film progresses. Any items which seem unsuitable when thus utilised can be altered at rehearsals. If for no other reason, the experience gained in fitting the film musically as it is made gives a start to the amateur of this department, and is to be strongly recommended.

The question of "effects" or "noises off" is one that causes some little heart-burning and, whilst many of the items needed can be manufactured with a little ingenuity, gramophone records, suitably reproduced, have such remarkable realism that it is really scarcely worth while to attempt such manufacture. Slight mistakes in fitting a film musically will usually escape notice, but with effects absolute timing and synchronisation is essential. Nothing is more likely to ruin an otherwise excellent show than a badly-timed effect—be it pistol shot or thunderstorm.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that if signs of weakness are apparent in this department, the noises off had better be cut right out, however ruthless such action may seem to the individuals concerned.

The Columbia Graphophone Company of London have published a "Catalogue of Film Accompaniment Records" in "Characteristic and Mood Music," and amateurs are strongly recommended to secure a copy of this—they will find it invaluable. Since the question of copyright and publishing is being straightened out at the time of writing, it is necessary to communicate with the gramophone

record companies to secure permission to use such records for *public* showings.

The principal headings of these records are given (by permission) in these pages as an indication of the range possible, and the whole, of course, still leaves much scope for individual imagination and treatment. That portion dealing with effect records is given in full and, in the writer's opinion, forms one of the best fifty shillings' worth the amateur musical director can purchase. It will be observed that electrical reproduction is essential for the adequate amplification of these records.

Mood Classifications

The following moods are represented in the catalogue :

1. STAGE EFFECTS RECORDS.
2. AGITATOS—Battle, Dramatic, Heavy, Light Misterioso, etc.
3. BRIGHT MOVEMENTS—Cabaret, Carnival.
4. CHARACTERISTIC — Barbaric, Futuristic, Grotesque, Humorous, Hunting.
5. DANCE MOVEMENTS—Ballet, Waltzes, etc.
6. DRAMATIC—Heavy, Passionate.
7. FLOWING MOVEMENTS—Songs, Melodies.
8. NATIONAL—

American	Belgian	Bohemian
English	French	Hawaian
Hebrew	Hungarian	Irish
Italian	Oriental	Scandinavian
Scotch	Spanish	Welsh

9. LIGHT MOVEMENTS—Entr'actes, Intermezzi, etc.
10. MARCHES—Galops, Parades, Processionals, etc.
11. MISTERIOSO.
12. PASTORAL.
13. PATHETIC.
14. PERIOD—Gavottes, Minuets.
15. RELIGIOSO—Christmas, Hymns.
16. SLOW MOVEMENTS—Adagios, Andantes, etc.
17. ACCORDION RECORDS.
18. MARCHES OUT.

Other sections of the catalogue give suggested records in the comprehensive style illustrated by an item, taken at random, from Section 2 (Agitatos).

			<i>Record</i>
<i>Name.</i>	<i>Mood.</i>	<i>Composer.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Allegro Vigoroso.	Semi- dramatic.	Zamecnik.	D19251

Recorded by

Orchestra.

Those who follow the suggestions in the journal mentioned will find a great deal of guidance. Visits to the local cinema will also convey the sort of thing to aim at.

It is essential that records, when used for film presentation, should be kept in careful order, and a double turntable is desirable, although the use of two machines will provide a good substitute. Columbia's suggested instructions on this matter are so very comprehensive that they are reproduced here.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF RECORDS FOR FILM ACCOMPANIMENT

1. Select from the library all individual records to be used for the picture to be performed.

2. Assort them in cue racks in the rotation in which they are to be played, leaving blank spaces for repeats.

3. The first cue should be played on the right-hand turntable, and the second on the left-hand turntable, the entire picture to be kept on the basis of odd cues on the right, and even ones on the left.

4. To obtain the best musical results, and to minimise wear on records, it is urged that needles be changed after each record has been played through or after each two or three partial playings.

5. Care must be taken that every record is returned to its proper place either in the cue racks or in the library storage, as the case may demand, when the day's performances are finished.

6. It is essential that the turntable has reached full revolving speed before the record is engaged.

7. Always lift the pick-up from records when the cue has been finished, as there is the possibility of the needle being accidentally pushed across the record.

Section 1.—COLUMBIA "STAGE EFFECTS" RECORDS
TEN RECORDS (38 VARIOUS EFFECTS) COMPLETE IN ALBUM

10-inch Yellow Label, 5s. each.

YB1	{ FIRE ENGINE EFFECTS—(1) Bell. (2) Siren. (3) Bell and Siren. CLOCK CHIMES AND BELLS—(1) Quarter-hour. (2) Half-hour. (3) Three-quarters. (4) Twelve o'clock.
YB2	{ CROWD EFFECT or Angry Mob. FAIR GROUND—Crowd Effect and Roundabouts, etc.
YB3	{ CHEERING CROWD. CLASHING SWORDS AND CROWD MURMURS.
YB4	{ THUNDER STORM. WIND AND HURRICANE.
YB5	{ AEROPLANE—Starting, Steady Flight and Stopping. SIRENS—(1) Factory; (2) Liner; (3) Tug; (4) Distant Steamboat.
YB6	{ AMERICAN TRAIN—Starting; In Motion and Stopping. ENGLISH TRAIN—Starting; In Motion and Stopping.
YB7	{ STORM AT SEA. SEA WASH AND BREAKERS.
YB8	{ WEDDING MARCH AND RINGING BELLS. BELLS—(1) Midnight; (2) Angelus; (3) Peals. TRUMPETS AND BUGLES—(1) Fanfare; (2) Réveillé; (3) Bugle Call—Cook-House; (4) Lights Out.
YB9	{ (1) ORCHESTRA TUNING UP. (2) CHORD OFF AND APPLAUSE. BAND—(1) GOD SAVE THE KING. (2) Marche Lorraine.
YB10	{ ORCHESTRA—GOD SAVE THE KING and MARCH ("Under the Double Eagle") (For End of Performance).

These Records are intended for use with Electrical Gramophones to ensure adequate amplification.

COMPLETE IN ALBUM

PRICE 50s.

CHAPTER VII

AMATEUR FILMS

I

IT is as well for the amateur film producer to study the basic facts of what must be considered a definite art form. Bouvier's admonition that "any form of art is an exacting school, and the life of an earnest artist is a busy one" must be taken well to heart. Slavko Vorkapich, a notability in the purlieus of Hollywood, has said that, "A perfect motion picture would be comparable to a symphony. It would have a definite rhythmical pattern, each of its movements would correspond to the mood of the sequence and each individual phrase (scene) would be an organic part of the whole. And like a symphony, it would be interesting at every moment of its development regardless of the meaning or story it has to convey."

This may strike the reader as putting the subject on a very high plane, but the ideal must exist for us to work at. E. Steichen, the famous photographer, put it all very briefly when he said, "Simply make your pictures pleasing to look at," but in effect he means the same thing.

Unlike a still photograph, a moving picture is

normally the product of several people and, to approach the ideal set out above, it is needed that "the writer, actor, cinematographer and all connected with the production of the film, whilst required primarily to be experts in their particular field, should have sufficient knowledge of the tasks and problems of each other to intelligently co-operate for the good of the picture as a whole."

II

SUB-STANDARD LIMITATIONS

An analysis of many amateur cine films of the more serious and ambitious nature shows that the majority of efforts fall between the two stools of under and over ambition. Thus we have the mediocre film that is the average output of club or individual, on the one hand the product of nervousness at attempting the complicated (or possibly misapplied simple resources), and on the other a non-realisation of an amateur's limitations.

Strictly speaking, this chapter is mis-named in that it is the amateur's limitations, and limitations of resources at that, with which we are concerned for, presumably, the 16-mm. film is capable of all that can be accomplished by its full-sized brother.

No amateur club or individual cine worker, unless almost in the professional class, can hope to compete with or attempt to equal the professional scale of efficiency. To illustrate this point a quotation is made from an article on "Optical

Printing," by Lloyd Knechtel, in Volume II of the *Cinematograph Annual*. He says :

"In a recent picture one scene combined, thanks to the optical printer, these components: The main action and set were photographed in full scale on the stage, with dialogue. The sky was put in by means of a glass shot. The background—which contained considerable action—was put in by the Dunning process. The foreground was largely a miniature. And a part of the middle distance was put in, by simple double exposure. All of these were combined into a single negative by means of optical printing post treatment, and the whole was absolutely undetectable as a composite—even by experts."

It is thus apparent that what appears to be a fairly simple straightforward shot may, in reality, be a composite of as many as half a dozen processes which, with the exception of the simple double exposures, etc., are beyond the scheming of the 16-mm. enthusiast. That this is so by no means indicates or excuses inefficiency on the amateur's part, but it does stress that these limitations must constantly be borne in mind, and that the too ambitious or elaborate film needs extremely careful treatment to produce a completed and satisfactory effort.

It has been said "optical printing," as exemplified by the quoted extract, is not normally possible for the usual run of amateurs, indeed, the writer has yet to hear of any such treatment being accorded 16-mm. or 9.5-mm. film—the cost of processing

of this nature *if* it is available would surely be almost prohibitive.

At the same time the very complexity of modern day photoplay photography opens out a rather fascinating prospect for the investigator who, by doing his own developing and processing, cares to experiment and try out some of the methods indicated, and there is always, of course, enormous scope for the exercise of originality and invention in this field. This is shown by the fact that, although extremely popular in "still" photography under the name of table-top work, the practice of "miniature" cinematography, though used to a surprising extent professionally, is more or less untouched by and for the amateurs in practice and in writing—possibly the admitted difficulty of obtaining or manufacturing the tiny models is responsible for this neglect, but a study and use of this method will certainly aid amateurs to overcome many of their troubles in sets and locations. And for the really hot-blooded cine enthusiast a complete study of all such methods is one road, and quite a good road, to the glittering cities of filmland's studios.

III

SIMPLE FILMS

I

Simplicity of story or theme in a scenario appeals to both amateur and advanced worker alike. To

the former because the essential simplicity attracts by its comparative ease of portrayal cinematically, and to the latter by reason of the inherent possibilities of elaboration of technique (in most cases attempted over-elaboration !).

The above is not to say that real simplicity is easy of attainment when filming. Reflection upon the masterpieces of art, music and literature will show that in each case a simple subject, theme or plot has produced the best in the worker, yet there are but few genuine masterpieces in any field, whilst complicated and twisted pictures, symphonies and stories—all of which may be styled “clever-clever”—abound.

Those cine enthusiasts who have been fortunate enough to see Pabst's great film “Kameradschaft,” know that the story is simple and free from complications, the production masterly in its directness, and the photography superb in its technique, but straightforward withal. Yet the film as a whole gained rather than suffered by its essential sincerity and simplicity.

So with the amateur—directness and simplicity must be keynotes in the mental make-up of the beginner who is, mercifully, forced to comply with this by lack of impedimenta and the limitations imposed by his outfit. The desired simplicity can be attained in a pleasing variety of ways—the world looks a peculiar place when projected from a few feet of film which have been exposed *via* the neck of a glass pickle jar, but nicer far when pictured from the hilltops !

A further point often overlooked but which is of great interest to the amateur is that a direct and simply portrayed film will not date unduly. As every other art, cinephotography has its fads and fancies of fashion, all of which are dropped and forgotten as time goes on, to be remembered with a wry smile when the five-year-old film is again projected. Apart from costume, the simple film cannot date in this manner and it remains on a par with the well-arranged travel film which is as interesting to-day as when, years ago, we were very anxiously awaiting its arrival from the processers. "The production of a film may be described as the execution of an idea" . . . and there are two ways of taking that statement!

2

It is obvious that there is no royal road to the making of a perfect film, common sense and experience are, perhaps, the greatest guiding factors, and the amateur cannot read too much on the subject, or see too many professional films at the cinema. In the following pages are set out various suggestions *re* that bugbear of all cinematographers: What shall I film? No attempt has been made to give details of lighting, camera positions, etc. By the time the average amateur has reached the stage of contemplating a serious film, he should have mastered the technicalities of cine camera-craft. If not, he had better sell his outfit! The details of exposure, camera position, etc., are just

those which enable each worker to make a film of individuality, and express his own ideas.

For the same reason, the ideas sketched as suitable for filming are not given in detail. The main idea is to make the worker think for himself and use the suggestions as a starting point for his own conceptions of what will constitute his film. At the same time the schemes suggested are all practicable and have been tried out with success.

Whilst mainly applied to group or club workers, the lone cine amateur can easily attempt the majority of scenarios and may take heart from the fact that among the year's ten best, of 1,000 amateur films, was Mr. A. G. Greaves' (Newcastle) film of the beauties of Northumberland. This is in colour and was taken in his spare time during week-ends.

CHAPTER VIII

EXPOSURE. THE SCRIPT. MAKING THE MOVIE.

FOR the expenditure of one guinea it is possible to obtain a very efficient cine exposure meter. There are, however, many who begrudge, for various reasons, the purchase of such a meter. The writer has but one criticism of these useful instruments. When it is necessary to bring the cine camera into action quickly, there is usually little or no time to fiddle about with a meter. Decision as to exposure must be made at once, and the correct decision can only be made by experience, normally acquired by the expenditure and waste of many feet of film.

This experience may be more swiftly and more economically obtained by allocating a few feet of film for the formation of one's own exposure meter which, whilst being a useful standby, teaches exposure judgment as it is being made.

The scheme is quite simple, trial exposures of a few frames are made in all conditions of light and on both interior and exterior subjects. If the amateur is the proud possessor of a series of lenses, exposures are also made to include the use of these. A record is kept of the details and the resulting knowledge obtained on viewing the negatives or positives is utilised for future shootings

A simple method, and an obvious, but one that is put into use rarely by amateurs although it will save very many feet of good film in the course of a year. Those who do their own development will find it an additional guide to this somewhat difficult art.

In the actual shooting of a scene it is good practice to take it a little longer than is necessary. It is easy enough to cut a shot down, but impossible to stretch it should need to do so unexpectedly arise. If when filming one scene, another scene of action presents itself (they sometimes do) it is worth taking for possible future use.

It is good practice to prepare the script for a film as much in advance as one can. It should be as exhaustive as can be and contain everything, length, action and spoken titles, etc. Time expended upon this very necessary and absorbing task will be more than saved by the greater smoothness of running during the actual filming.

These script and plot sheets are invaluable in obtaining continuity during editing and titling and also for the musical director at the screening of the film. Scene numbering notebooks containing, in a small compass, all the information needed can be obtained from reputable dealers and form a very excellent investment.

THE SCRIPT

Every amateur will have his own idea as to what constitutes the best form of scenario or script, and for amateur purposes it is not strictly essential

to adhere to the professional plan too closely. However, it is very necessary that a definite plan be formulated and adhered to. Failure to do this usually results in a bit of a "mess-up" both during filming and in editing.

An idea of a good style of layout is given here in the reprint of a script from a booklet published by Kodak Ltd. The plot is simple, but it will be seen that the script gives a comprehensive view of it and leaves no room for doubt in the director's mind as to the sequences. The film editor, too, will have cause to bless a clearly-worded sheet of this nature, and it should be borne in mind that every planned film—even of the most elementary nature—should thus be captured in writing before a foot of film is exposed.

The script, or continuity as it is also called, must not be confused with the scenario. The script forms the final working directions in a brief manner, whilst the scenario provides the directors and actors with the feeling and *motif* of the film-play.

THE SCRIPT

TITLE 1

WILLIAM JONES, JR.

presents

CHOCOLATE PIE À LA MUD

TITLE 2

CAST OF CHARACTERS

<i>Billy</i>	.	.	.	.	William Jones, Jr.
<i>Buck</i>	.	.	.	.	Brownell Brown
<i>The Cook</i>	.	.	.	.	Mrs. William Jones
<i>The Tramp</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. William Jones

TITLE 3 PIES LIKE COOK ALWAYS BAKES

Scene 1 Long shot of cook standing on back porch — facing outdoors — trimming pies.

Scene 2 Long shot, full view showing *Billy* and *Buck* peeking around corner of house, watching cook.

Scene 3 Close-up of scene 1.

Scene 4 Close-up of scene 2—*Billy* and *Buck*.

Scene 5 Distant view, *Billy* and *Buck* running to garage and disappearing behind it.

TITLE 4 A FRAME-UP

Scene 6 Near view, *Billy* and *Buck* pointing to mud pies on sandpile beside garage.

Scene 7 Close-up, *Billy* with mud pie in his hand animatedly talking to *Buck*.

TITLE 5 SHE'LL NEVER KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Scene 8 Close-up, *Billy* registering great merriment.

Scene 9 Close-up, *Buck*—same as scene 8.

Scene 10 Distant view, *Billy* and *Buck* sneaking up to porch, *Billy* with mud pie. Cook turns and enters kitchen.

Scene 11 Near view, boys substitute mud pie for chocolate pie. They hide the chocolate pie back of porch pillar and make get-away.

Scene 12 Close-up, cook picks up mud pie and covers top with meringue. Leaves pies to cool—exits kitchen door.

Scene 13 Close-up, boys behind garage in great glee watching scene 12.

Scene 14 Same as scene 13, boys registering great excitement.

TITLE 6 LOOK, HE'S GOIN' TO STEAL IT !

Scene 15 Distant view, tramp sneaking up to pies.

Scene 16 Close-up, scene 15. Tramp steals mud pie. Tramp sneaks off—Left.

TITLE 7 LET'S FOLLOW !

Scene 17 Near view, boys register excitement and follow tramp to nearby thicket.

Scene 18 Distant view, boys peeking from behind bushes looking at tramp. Tramp getting ready to cut pie.

Scene 19 Close-up, boys registering gleeful excitement—nudging each other.

TITLE 8 À LA MUD

Scene 20 Close-up, tramp cuts big piece of pie with pocket knife. Tramp registers hungry anticipation—all smiles. Tramp bites into mud. Tramp registers consternation and mouthful of sand.

Scene 21 Close-up, boys rolling on grass overcome by laughter.

THE END

MAKING THE AMATEUR MOVIE

It isn't long after the possession of a home movie camera that the enthusiastic owner turns his mind to shots other than those of Alice running down (or up) the garden, and young Bill playing on the sands at Brighton! These and kindred subjects have already cost a small fortune, and oh, the distressing sameness of these films!

A feature film is obviously the next step and, whilst joining an amateur club for this purpose is undoubtedly the best thing for anyone to do, it is a regrettable fact that the great majority do not. Perhaps this is just as well—imagine a successful club of, say, 100 members, everyone determined to be the camera man! For, of course, the camera owner, if he is a true enthusiast, will be camera man or nothing!

Well then, let us leave the club members alone and presume that they worry along without trouble. The non-member, deprived of the facilities for meeting others of his kind, promptly ropes in all his friends of both sexes, and in a wave of intense excitement a story is fixed, the players cast and shooting ultimately commences.

The result is that before the film is half taken, most of the band are half-hearted, and by the time the thing is finished quite half of the group will have drifted away.

This is caused by the extraordinary fact that over half the number originally recruited have

nothing to do! It is not within the province of this section to detail just how the film should be taken or produced—that is the task of the directing men, etc. The trouble is that when all such jobs as actors, director, camera man, continuity, etc., are fixed, there inevitably remains a residue of very keen but rather disappointed workers with no job save that of hangers on. The flagging and failing interest of this section will undoubtedly affect the others, and may spoil things quite a lot.

It is possible to give everyone a job of some sort that will make them feel that they are really taking part in the production, and will keep their energy and interest going the whole time. A few such posts are enumerated below :

1. Appoint someone to keep an eye on the exact position of props, etc., and keep a note of the actors' clothing.
2. Musical Director, either pianist or gramophone. Let him browse over and study the story for his setting, and why not let him try his stuff out during rehearsal ?
3. A Liaison Officer. Select the most tactful of the party to interview folk to get permission for exterior shots.
4. Appoint a Film Editor, and
5. A Film Titler. (These two can work together.)
6. Art Director. This is most important, even if only for title backgrounds.

7. Appoint a Boundary man to see that other people and players not on the set keep off it. And during outdoor shots keep an eye on the background, giving a warning when stray cars and folk appear on the scene.

One could keep on indefinitely with such a list and, although many of these jobs may not at first glance seem strictly essential to the success of your film, it will be found that the distribution of such tasks, whilst being really useful in that, as the filming proceeds, so do such necessities as editing, titling and musical setting, thus speeding up the whole production, and the interest of everyone concerned is maintained right up to the end.

A final point, much celluloid will flow through the camera ere the film is finished, and a fair percentage of this will go into the waste film box. Is it not worth while to give everyone a brief mention in the preliminary titles? It only takes a few feet of film, and is exceedingly gratifying to the more humble workers in the cause—try it !

CHAPTER IX

THE TITLE

As in all other arts experience is the best guide to titling the home movie. It is a great pity that so soon as the processed film arrives from the dealers, the average amateur rushes it through the projector and gives a hastily, and usually ill-conceived, spoken title when necessary.

Unless the amateur is very young, past visits to the cinema in its silent days will have given an idea on titles. Read what a Hollywood cinematographer—William Stull—has to say about titles for home movies. The principal reasons for using titles are :

1. To explain the theme and purpose of the picture.
2. To identify and characterise the actors, the setting, and time of the action.
3. To convey ideas which the pictorial action cannot or does not convey : for example, spoken dialogue.
4. To cover lapses of time, changes of location, or jumps in continuity.
5. To economise in the matter of footage and to save production costs where substituting for scenes not shown.

Never include a title when some visual device can be used. Such pictorial devices are far more telling than the best titles, and add that indefinable quality "subtlety" to the picture. When in doubt about a title—don't use it. Where used, be sure they are perfect; badly-written titles do a tremendous lot of harm. Study the mood of the picture and word the titles in harmony with this mood. Make the titles clear and concise, don't overwrite but don't be too brief, write titles until you feel that they cannot be improved.

Nobody reads yesterday's jokes, so be careful of your humour—let the action of the picture convey humour whenever possible—your "witty" title may read very "flat" in a few weeks' time, for humour dates very rapidly.

One of the functions of the title is to bridge a space of time. In this case the length of the title should be proportionate to the time it bridges. Action occurring, say, an hour or two later, can be introduced by a title bearing just those words, but if several years elapse such a title is too brief to allow the audience to adjust itself. To avoid being too wordy in such a case, use can be made of the fade out and fade in of the scenes and title, thus extending the length of the time interval.

Professionals generally allow one second per word for the first ten seconds and thereafter half-second per word for the title footage. But with home movies a standard of half-second per word, with a minimum of three to four seconds may safely be used, calculating $2\frac{1}{2}$ seconds to the foot of film.

So it is not an easy job this titling! Give it the consideration it deserves, for a series of well-chosen, adequately screened titles will add much to the general polish of the amateur film. Mr. Stull is a very renowned cinematographer, and his remarks on this subject should be taken very much to heart!

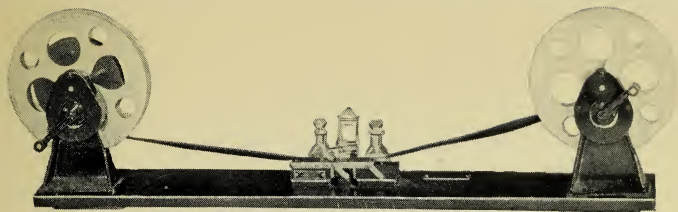
Moving backgrounds can be utilised for titles by double exposure or by interposing a sheet of celluloid, with the title inscribed, before the lens when actually shooting. An enlarged "frame" of the previous scene with the title on celluloid can be filmed, with the result that the scene appears to come to action when the title goes off. Trick titles offer great scope for ingenuity, *i.e.*, a picture of the title written in dust (and the dust blown away by means of bellows) taken in reverse ultimately screens as appearing from a cloud of dust. The field of moving or still titles is so vast and offers such outlets for one's ideas of art (or futuristic sense) that it has become beloved of all amateurs—every cinematographic journal is packed with novelties for producing odd and amusing titles.

CHAPTER X

EDITING

ANOTHER terror facing the amateur when the shooting and development of his film is complete is that of editing. It has been said, earlier in this work, that a film is a composite production of several people. Whilst this holds good, there is no doubt that in the final editing lies much of the film's chances of success or failure as a production. It is, therefore, rather impossible, despite much written in the journals, to absolutely direct a man in what is actually a personal thing. No two people will agree as to the inclusion in a film of any given scene, or as to the length a scene should be.

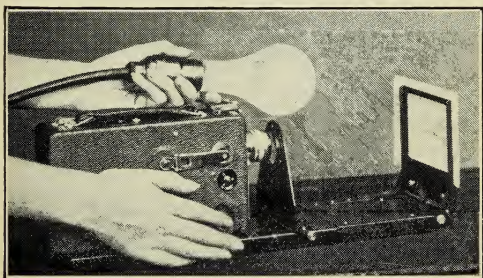
The final character and tempo of the film is decided at the editor's hands, and he should studiously refer to the script book in order to keep himself *au fait* with the plot—else he will sometimes wonder why certain scenes were ever shot at all! A splicer, of course, is essential with the rewinder on the editor's desk, and all cuttings from any scenes should be saved for possible future use. The wise man files these with accuracy, for they are invaluable later on for other films.



6.—(A) THE “KODASCOPE” RAPID SPLICER AND REWIND which greatly simplifies editing.



(B) This is an enlarged portion of the picture above. It shows the Splicer which can be supplied separately.



(C) THE CINE-KODAK TITLER: The titles are typed or written and then photographed either in daylight or artificial light.

To face p. 60

An editor can always purchase scenes from a film company's library if it has not been possible to take them during filming. Such things as warships, views of foreign towns and air flights, for instance, can be purchased in this way. This "borrowing" from other films is quite the accepted order of things, and keen cinema-goers have probably noted the same lion and tiger fight in half a dozen "Wild Africa" films!

Editing and continuity go hand in hand, and beyond stating broadly that short "flashes" of scenes give a fast tempo and long scenes a slow tempo, it is practically impossible to advise upon this subject. The average amateur will have his own way and express his own ideas in this matter, and quite correctly, for it is *his* film and will stand as he makes it.

Messrs. Kodak Ltd., in their booklet on the editing and titling of amateur films, have so ably summarised the essentials of editing that one cannot do better than to use their scheme as a base for the evolution of one's own editing routine. With permission the summary is here printed.

It at once becomes obvious that editing a film is not child's play, and the *nouveau* editor is strongly advised to ponder well over the scenario and script and give deep thought to the whole film ere he makes the first cut in any scene. Fortunately, any little slip on the editor's part can be rectified by judicious use of the splicer. Too great a reliance must not be placed on this ubiquitous adjunct to the cinematic art.

SUMMARY FOR EDITING YOUR FILMS

1. Set up projector and screen, and thread film.
2. Have a small pad on hand.
3. Start projector.
4. Stop at place for first title, cut, or change in scene order.
5. Make proper notes on pad. These notes should be sufficiently clear to enable you to identify each scene as you need it.
6. Disengage the motor.
7. Locate the exact frame desired.
8. Cut a small notch in the edge of the film where the splice is to be made.
9. Continue through film in this manner.
10. Cut and rearrange scenes; winding the scenes on small reels in the order desired, as indicated on the indexing slips.
11. Attach the scenes in their proper order, winding them on 400-foot reels, and rewind film.
12. Have the necessary titles ready.
13. Splice in titles at proper places.
14. Continue through film in this manner and rewind film.

CHAPTER XI

THE PLOT AND SCENARIO

I

COMPLEXITY of plot and scenario for the first serious films attempted form the reason for many disappointed amateurs. Visits to the local cinema and photographic and story-writing enthusiasms are the main cause of this failing. It must be completely understood that even the most mediocre films, both in story and photography, that one views at the cinema are produced with the aid of a multiplicity of technical accessories such as few individuals, or even well-to-do clubs, possess or can command.

In the early days of professional silent films the Swedish film colony swept the market by the supreme sincerity and simplicity of their picture plays. The aim of all amateurs should be towards sincerity and simplicity. Complexity and artificiality will follow in due course as experience is gained with the first, which are the primal bases of all entertainment, be it literature, music or histrionic. Welding of the four, in other arts detestable and detectable, is cinematically permissible and

necessary since the whole being of a film is, in its essence, artificial.

An idea or plot having been thought out for a film scenario should be capable of being written—scene by scene—in black and white without undue difficulty. Trouble found in expressing the idea or scene in writing is a sure indication of difficulty in filming or acting—reduce the item to a more simple form and the difficulty will, in all probability, be smoothed away.

The amateur, then, must cast around for a subject that is simple both in its plot and manufacture. Such subjects abound on all sides in every walk of life—quite a dramatic little film could be made showing the sowing, growth and harvesting of a field of corn, and a film, moreover, that would give every opportunity for capturing pictorial beauty and art, to say nothing of its final musical setting.

It is not proposed to detail plots and scenarios for making films within the average capacity, for to film another's play is, in the writer's view, a thing in which true sincerity cannot be expressed. Nevertheless, in order to indicate the general lines of conceiving the scheme and order, a brief outline of a film is given. It will be obvious that it is by no means perfect, and equally obvious that it can be altered and extended, modified or amplified to suit any similar idea, that, in fact, is its main purpose in appearing in these pages. It will be seen that sub-titles are dispensed with entirely.

THE DAY

Scene of a sunrise taken through an open bedroom window. Flash to alarm clock ringing by bedside. A hand enters picture and switches off clock.

Flash to electric light which suddenly glows, throwing shadows on wall of a woman dressing. A hand shakes the covered figure of a man in the bed. Flash to scene of eggs frying on a stove. Flash of a lathered face reflected in a mirror.

Shot of a breakfast table with arms of man and woman busily engaged with knives and forks, followed by scene of man's hand picking up hat, stick and gloves. Long shot of couple embracing, the faces hidden by the embrace. Man leaves house. Woman is seen, back view, clearing table, washing up, going out, entering shops and returning home.

Changes dress, introduce another woman. Close-up of tea cups. Farewell to visitor at door. Close-up of woman's hands playing at piano, fade out. Fade in to man's hand working on ledger. Fade out and in to a clock at 5 p.m. Man leaving office and a genre view of foot on rest in a public house. Flash to woman laying table for dinner. Flash to clock at 6 p.m. Man enters, embraces wife. Scene of dinner table with arms of man and woman as at breakfast.

Fade out and in to view from rear of two arm-chairs before fire, with clock on shelf at 11 p.m.

Close-up of clock. Clock is wound up by man. Lights are put out and bedroom is again shown. Shadows of the two disrobing. Light is put out. End with view of moon through bedroom window.

If, on reading this rather crude outline, the reader thinks "Well, I can do better than that!" the object is gained and as intended, the sketch has been the starting point of, perhaps, a really good idea, and the point emphasised that it is very possible to make a more than passable film with very simple accoutrements.

A little thought and a realisation of one's limitations in the cinema field will do more to produce good films than will much reading of the ideas of others on the subject. In casting the film it may be safely placed on record that near relatives of the producer or camera man rarely make good actors—it is exceptionally difficult to overcome the family idea of humour! That is why, in the outline above, the author is at great pains never to let the faces of the couple concerned be seen. The omission of this detail turned what promised to be a fiasco into a somewhat unusual picture

II

Books of scenarios may be thumbed and finally discarded because they need too much elaboration of treatment, or simply because they are too futile.

By too elaborate is meant the setting, or the number needed for the cast.

It is very rare that the "lone" cine worker is entirely lonely—he can usually rake up two or three willing assistants—and it is for this class of worker that this section is intended. All around him are plots and stories simply shrieking to be filmed, if the amateur will, or could, but see them. Let him turn on the radio to a dance band. Can any story, amusing or tragic, be culled from the tuneful crooning of the local Jack Smith? No? Rather incredible, but we will pass on to the sheet music in the piano stool. Now surely something filmable will be found amongst the old ballads, even if you feel that "Asleep in the Deep" is a trifle too ambitious for you. No? Also incredible, but your eyes are not fully open yet—just glance through your pile of gramophone records and pick out some bright and popular number. Here is Parlophone record No. R567. A little thought and away we go on the following lines.

THE BODY IN THE BAG

- Shot 1.* Gentleman mournfully plunking a banjo or similar instrument, fades to
- Shot 2.* Same gent being horrified to discover the pet cat lying dead. He shakes head sadly and puts the body in a bag. Obviously wonders what to do with it. He scratches his head and wanders off.

- Shot 3.* Appears in a café, dumps bag, drinks mineral and leaves hurriedly. Is followed by waitress who returns the bag with smiles. Gent, registering "fed-upness," walks into a
- Shot 4.* Country lane, in gazing around he stumbles over a tree root and falls into a ditch. Registers rage and flings bag containing cat into a nearby clump of trees. (Camera "pans" bag as it descends.)
- Shot 5.* Sylvan scene of car picnickers (lady and gent). Bag descends into the lady's lap. She is upset over the picnic gear. Her enraged escort grabs the bag and dashes up to the thrower and
- Shot 6.* Swipes him a mighty slosh with the bag. Gent collapses, the bag falls open and out rolls the cat with a litter of kittens. All gather round
- Shot 7.* And laugh heartily, the scene fading to
- Shot 8.* Original gent plunking on his banjo.

FINIS

Here we have a simple comedy film of eight scenes, needing a cast of just three people if the waitress in shot three is doubled by the lady of shot five. The café, by the way, is easily arranged—just a suggestion by a couple of tables and an awning in any garden—the appearance of the waitress will do the rest. Do not be misled into thinking that

the above plot is too simple to be effective. It is simple and, as a song, made a hit in two continents, which brings us to the fact that if some attention is paid to the timing of the song upon the record, a very excellent music and singing "sound" accompaniment results. (Hence the mention of shots one and eight, which may be omitted if attention is not given this latter point.)

The above example should suffice to show that ample scope for films exists in every home or boarding house and really, when you come to think of it, one could make quite a nice little film of that "Asleep in the Deep" song! Why not have a try?

It is fairly safe to assume that most of the subjects thought filmable by the average man are not so for a variety of reasons—cost, location, etc.; conversely it does not mean that every unlikely thing will make a good film, but it gives a very decided hint in that direction. Even shots of the house before, during and after its new coat of paint, have a certain interest if presented in an interesting manner (mainly pictorial in this case). Again, a simple subject such as that of growing mustard and cress upon a piece of flannel and showing, possibly, its ultimate fate as a garnish, salad or sandwich would provide an amusing item in a "hotch-potch" film of general trifles. For "filmettes" of this nature, of course, a certain patience is needed, and the shots taken at good intervals—say every two days—but the wise cine man either opens up a new spool of film or ends

one on a few feet of this item—splicing does the rest later.

The filming of the cash transaction at a bank when a cheque is handed in opens up several possibilities. For instance, two cheques could be written and posted, and the reactions and expenditure of the recipients made the “plot” of the picture. One could be shown spending the cash on gay living, the purchase of wireless or some such luxury. Contrasting with this the other could be shown buying a new suit of clothes, ordering coal, getting vegetables and ending up with a visit to the local cinema. This subject lends itself to a variety of individual treatments and may be considered distinctly *avant garde* but none the less interesting to film or watch screened on that account.

A slight but humorous film can be made on the following lines :

A child is shown practising a song at the piano. (Close-up of title.) Child is obviously kicking up the deuce of a row—show dog barking and hopping away from the piano. Show another child (or adult) practising singing the song (show title). Also kicking up a row—show cat running from room. Here give a title saying “Six Weeks Later,” or something like that, followed by scene of pianist and singer attempting the song together—apparently not too badly as is demonstrated by the cat and dog sitting by and enjoying it.

In print it looks simple to the point of absurdity,

and it *is* simple. However, a very casual survey of any professional film or scenario will reveal that it is mainly due to the efforts of three factions that a given plot results in a passable film. (1) The director, who impinges his ideas, twists and schemes upon (2) the actors, who infuse their histrionic ability and personality to (3) the camera man who sums up the total of the others and imparts to it the general pictorialisation and technical skill needed to enable the others to convey their ideas.

Thus it will be seen that, story and setting apart (and the more superior the story and setting the better), it is the general *treatment* of any given theme that proves to be the deciding factor in any film, ambitious or unpretentious. This applies to the amateur director and actor equally, and particularly to the amateur camera man who so often combines directorial duties with that of photographing the play, and upon whom, as in the professional field, much of the ultimate success of the venture depends.

CHAPTER XII

WHAT TO FILM

IT is not necessary to travel far from one's home in order to shoot a perfectly acceptable little film. Here, for instance, is one recently made and tentatively titled "Our Clock." A blank or unoccupied end of the mantelshelf is shown, succeeded by hands heaping money on it. The following shots indicate the hands removing the money and piling up cigarette boxes as each portion of cash is taken away.

Then comes a close-up of a coupon being removed from a packet, followed by a veritable snowstorm of coupons (or what looked like them!) and a small gilt clock stands revealed. This last shot was, of course, taken with the camera in reverse *i.e.*, the clock being in position and covered with coupons, and these latter then blown away by a draught of air—use the old vacuum cleaner, also in reverse! The whole thing did not take half an hour, and quite an amusing little film was the result. A continuation of this is in plan. It is proposed to have the same opening and up to the storm of coupons, which will reveal a small baby. This shot should raise a laugh, and suggests scope for a very saucy sub-title!

It is rather surprising to learn that many, having loaded their cameras and taken a succession of shots of a bird's nest in the building, decide that they cannot use their cameras until the nest is completed. Rather a pity to lay up the work like that; it is far more simple to shoot a few feet on the subject at the beginning or end of every reel one uses. The isolated shots can then be spliced together into a long footage, and the camera is free for use during the whole time. And it pays to always keep the camera handy.

Chess is a favourite pastime of many, and a rediscovery of a box of toy lead soldiers gave an idea for a film. It opened by shooting the last few decisive moves of a fairly easy game of chess and then, on a nearby table, following the moves with opposing detachments of toy soldiery and artillery. This indicates quite a lot of possible avenues. One could open up with the soldiers' battle and follow with the chessmen, or *vice versa*. Or, as each move is made on the board, splice in the corresponding shifting of soldiers—not forgetting to make a small white flag to hoist at the final defeat!

Then again the idea could be more ambitiously expressed by sight of an old man having a game of chess alone, with a small child playing with the soldiers at his feet, or make the old boy an ex-soldier, give him a few medals on his chest and let him watch the young boy playing as he, the old boy, dozes. Fade out and in to a "still" of the man in uniform as a young soldier (any

photograph will do), fade out and in to a tin soldier and let the film carry on the game of chess with soldiers on the board, moving by a fade to the troops on the ground, where a little episode of the old soldier's heroic battles is fought again by the toy soldiery. And so back to the chess board, dissolve the soldiers into chessmen and recede the camera to reveal the old man asleep and the young child also.

Of course the more one thinks of it the more ideas worth filming crop up, but that is the way of films—good films that is! and it is expected that every reader will concoct another scenario from the ideas created by the first! There is remarkable scope for title backgrounds to a film on the lines suggested above.

In a newspaper recently it was stated that an "Old Jake"—famous for his hand-beaten brassware—had just recovered from an illness at the age of 75. Now Old Jake is one of the few remaining handcraftsmen in the country, and it would be an interesting record if one had a spool showing him doing his brass work, both in normal and slow motion—the latter would give an excellent idea of his method of working the decorative lines on his jars, etc. Such a film would appeal to one or two societies interested in handcrafts.

Some little time ago a friend filmed his mother as she made and mixed, very deliberately, her justly famous cake. This was intended to be a "practical" joke to send to his aunt—she being wishful to learn how to make such dainties. How-

ever, he screened the film at his club one night, where it was quite well received. So well, in fact, that a man present—who turned out to be the principle of the local domestic institute—offered to buy it for use in his school. Needless to say, our cinematographer let him have it at a satisfactory profit, first obtaining a couple of copies, one of which is now on offer to another such school. It seems that he has struck a very good line in educational films! Possibly some readers will see what they can do about that picture on bee-keeping which they have had in mind for so long!

CHAPTER XIII

OUT OF THE RUT

GENERAL shots of trains leaving or entering stations, ships docking or sailing, motor-cars starting or stopping, coupled with views of Sadie eating candy and young Alf toddling down the pavement form the stock films of the usual run of sub-standard cinematographers. From this stage he should, by natural laws, evolve and develop into such a cine camera fiend that nothing but shortage of money prevents him from hiring the entire cast of Covent Garden Opera House and filming the act! The position, however, is normally such that it is nearly impossible for the isolated amateur to gather together a few companions to help him make a film of a more serious and ambitious nature. Everyone seems to want a crook play!

Apart from the above-mentioned troubles the cinematographer often fights shy of attempting the more difficult. This is not as it should be, the items usually taken in the first flush of cine camera enthusiasm have been detailed above with a definite reason. They constituted just the sort of film which professionals foisted on the public in the year dot of cinematography. Just imagine how much support the cinema of to-day would

obtain—or merit—if the film men of those early days had fought shy of difficulties, and films had remained as they were. But the difficulties were faced and overcome, as the world to-day can see at any cinema. The amateur, by the way, has not all the troubles of the early professionals—these good folk were without benefit of Super-Pan cine film, for instance.

This digression into the ethics of amateur cine work, whilst holding a very good moral, does not help the isolated, or nearly so, amateur to make his “different” films, and the writer offers his readers the general outline of a scheme which, whilst in the first place, being admittedly cribbed from that marvellous film of Arthur Robison’s, “Warning Shadows,” offers so much scope and variety that the charge of plagiarism just does not exist.

We are all familiar with the little cardboard figures and theatres to be purchased for a few coppers at any toy shop. These figures form our players, a sheet of white paper is then stretched across the front of the tiny theatre, the lighting arranged to give a good strong black outline, the camera is focussed, and away we go, filming whatever play we have decided upon, in *silhouette*!

It sounds, and is, very easy but there is, nevertheless, a certain amount of artistry called for—a wonderful field and world of shadow effects can be created, and the fashioning of these into a blended and harmonious whole will give endless delight and pleasure to the cinematographer. The writer

can imagine countless readers mutely inquiring, "Why not film the toy theatre direct, and not in silhouette?" To which the reply is, "All right—do so!" and the point has been gained, *i.e.*, the readers are really *thinking* about filming. Had it been suggested first that the theatre be filmed, how many readers would have thought of doing it in silhouette? Be honest now!

It is not the purpose of this chapter to give countless details of exposure, lighting, focus and development, all information regarding these very important items has often been, and doubtless often will be, published in the various journals, the files of which should be the holy books of all amateurs. Let us continue studying the possibilities of the little toy theatre, even though we have made films of plays both in the cut-outs and in shadowgraphs. Could we not evolve a little play in shadowland, using both toy theatre *and* human beings, something like this:

Toy shadows—Human shadows—Toy shadows.

On deciding the play, which need contain but one actor if carefully thought out, stretch the everhandy bed sheet so that it is in direct sun or artificial light. Cut out any required scenes from sheets of thick brown paper, and have a supply of pins to hand to fix in position on the sheet.

Start the play in the theatre and at the appropriate moment fade out and in, or mix into the big shadow theatre, continuing until it is necessary

or advisable to reverse the process, when the toy theatre is again used to complete the drama or comedy. Alternatively, the direct cut-out figures may be used in the theatre and a switch made to normal action of individuals, and so back to the theatre. Or the whole position reversed by starting the film full size, changing to toy or miniature where such can be suitably done, and thus back to normal or full shadows. Possibly a mixture of all three methods would produce an interesting film; the writer has never tried it, but it seems full of latent scope! The utilisation of the shadows or silhouettes, by the way, obviates necessity for too close an approximation of clothing or scenery, since a somewhat crudely shadowed suggestion is more readily accepted by the eye than a badly-made miniature or ill-chosen natural setting. Also, it is possible for the cine man to leave his camera running, sprint behind the screen and try a spot of shadow acting himself—always a fascinating thing to do.

A rather charming and simple little film has been made by reproducing, in model, a well-known local scene or beauty spot. A shot of this was mixed with one of the actual place and the resultant effort, duplicated several times and with several scenes, was extremely novel and, as has been said, rather charming. This rather suggests that the nimble-fingered camera man could easily make a few cardboard cut-outs of drawings or photographs, film them in silhouette and flash straight on to the scenes actual. Try it: you will be

pleasantly surprised at the variety of subjects and ideas that occur once any of the above notions is endeavoured. *Think* of your films and you will produce something worth while. The writer is in touch with one of the largest cine film processers in England, and the similarity of the shots sent in for treatment is really distressing, consisting merely of duplications of the items listed at the head of this chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

NOVELTY FILMS

TRICK or novelty films are usually the bane of the home cine worker who, from lack of experience or apparatus, fights shy of what he imagines calls for more skill than he possesses. Whilst it is true that certain kinds of trick film call for much skill, apparatus and technical knowledge, there are yet many little novelty items which can be filmed with a minimum of trouble and gear.

The owners of a toy theatre equipped with cut-out figures as described in the last chapter could, for example, produce a film on the following lines : A gramophone and its records are shown. A record held up and brought in as a close-up in order that the title may be displayed. (Select a vocal excerpt from an opera.) The record is then placed on the machine and started. Camera viewpoint drops to level of sound trumpet of gramophone, and the view is darkened momentarily to reveal the toy theatre in place of the gramophone. The curtain goes up and the action of the figures is, to some extent, conformed to the subject of the record. At the conclusion the curtain is dropped, the toy theatre fades out and the gramophone in. This idea has been sketched but lightly and gives

much scope for improvements and modifications at discretion. The fact of having a ready-made musical setting is rather an asset if some simple provision is made to keep the action more or less in step with the music. In the chapter on "Home Talkies" this suggestion is elaborated to some extent.

A quite amusing little film can be made of a game of chess. One of the players stretches out his hand, obviously to make a stupid move. He pauses a moment, then turns his head sharply and gazes at the camera, nods and smiles, alters his move and wins the game. In screening this film, at the point indicated by the pause, the projector operator or an accomplice calls out, "Don't do that, fool. Move the pawn!" The subsequent nods and smiles from the screen, in apparent reply, are most humorous.

For chess, of course, may be substituted Draughts, Ludo, Halma or any such excitement, whilst the sudden answering to a call from the audience can be adapted almost to any scheme of filming. One thing to remember—do not miss your cue in calling out, and do not overdo it!

When we have sunshine with us, it is a simple matter to rig up a screen, made from sheeting, across a sunlit window. We can use this as a background for a little shadow play. A cut-out of a cardboard cat chasing a similar dog, with a sudden flash, if possible, of a real cat and dog fight, returning to the shadows and ending with either the cat or dog shadow being carried off the

screen on a stretcher. A simple enough theme to film, and most amusing withal.

The writer can claim no experience with colour cinematography, but recently saw screened some beautiful shots of highly iridescent soap bubbles, among which beams of light were played. The film was shown as baldly as it has just been described. At the writer's suggestion an addition to the film was shot and the whole entitled "Bubbles." Following the title was presented, in colour, of course, a living reproduction of the famous picture of that name. The child very delightedly blew bubbles from his pipe, the camera fixed upon one and quickly flashed on to the special bubbles shown in the earlier film. At the conclusion the child bowed from the screen. Thus a very easily prepared addition made an interesting film entertaining. If facilities for a living model of the boy had not existed, use would have been made of a lithographic reproduction of the picture.

A very simple trick film which, whilst exploited to the full professionally, is none the less effective to make, is to take in reverse the plucking of a rose. To do this it is but necessary to invert the camera and film a rose in a vase. The rose is then plucked to pieces, petal by petal and leaf by leaf—all the debris being carefully thrown outside the film area. Finally the stalk is thrown away and the bowl removed.

At the screening of this effort it appears that the bowl is placed in position and the rose miraculously built up piecemeal. A humorous

title of the "Can *you* do this?" strain completes the whole. Naturally this method of making a novelty film can be applied to a great many subjects. We are all very familiar with the diver who so wonderfully sprouts from the water back to the diving board, and that gives us a good idea of the kind of thing to avoid. Seek for the less hackneyed effects—there are countless opportunities for this kind of film.

To follow a few incidents of the above nature, one could easily splice in a shot like this entitled, "What is it?" An enormous "wheel" filling the whole screen slowly approaches until it seems that the camera must be engulfed. The camera is then receded and the "wheel" is discovered to be the garden roller being trundled by the aged retainer. Obviously, a low camera point is all that is necessary to achieve this very, on the screen, striking and puzzling result.

Those of the amateurs who dabble in microscopy, or who have friends so inclined, have a remarkable field opened to them. In fact, this field is so very great and so very varied that it is impossible to do it justice here, and it is a subject which will well repay attention. One of the most striking of amateur films viewed by the writer consisted of the mingling of drops of coloured solutions as viewed through a microscope. The instrument used for this film was quite of the amateur kind and eminently suitable for filming the larger variety of the animalculæ, etc.

The fascinations of this branch call for the exercise



7.—This picture shows how simple it is to take pictures indoors by means of "Kodalites" and Super-Sensitive Panchromatic Cine-Kodak film.

of some little skill, but a proficiency is readily acquired—the main thing is prevention of vibration by the motor in the cine camera. A prominent worker in this field assured the author that after much experimenting with different means of rigidly clamping the camera to a steady base, he found that to hold it in position by hand was the most satisfactory. Colour workers should find this field doubly interesting, and views plain or coloured of mixing drops, crystal growths or solutions, etc., provide much exercise for ingenuity in the film's final titling and, particularly, in the musical setting.

Imagine a charming view of an Eastern bazaar, or a camp in the desert. Marquees and tents flutter bravely in the breeze as the camera tilts and pans to cover the whole camp. Also imagine the surprise of the audience as the camera recedes and discloses the camp to be in miniature, and their further surprise as a young lady picks up the various tents, shakes them out and pegs them on a clothes line, thus revealing that a grouping of dish cloths, table runners, lingerie and stockings, together with a few sprigs of fern or palm, possess a cinematic possibility little thought of by the amateur when he gazes at the steaming tub on wash-day! Now, up will pop the man who will make a fine sailing ship with sheets from the baby's cot!

Those who live in flats, and others, too, can easily produce a highbrow film—a "moral" picture of a game of Tiddleywinks—with several hands

plinking the counters around the pot. The scene fades quickly to that of a moth fluttering around a candle, flashes to tiddleywinks and then to a butterfly hovering around a flower. Flash back to the last counter going into the pot, then to the moth lying with scorched wings at the base of the light, and then to the butterfly struggling in a net. What the "moral" is does not seem quite clear, but it makes quite an effective little film! And it should not be overlooked that our old friend—the musical setting—can play his part very well in a film of this nature.

CHAPTER XV

USE YOUR " STILL " CAMERA !

THE average photographer obtaining a cine camera for the first time normally packs up the ordinary camera and turns with joy to the delights of his new hobby. Plates, films and cut films are forgotten, the great god " Cine-Pan " rules his heart !

To abandon any craft for a long period inevitably means that some of the art is lost, and that time must be expended regaining the lost ground if the old efficiency is to be attained. To prevent loss of one's skill with a camera then becomes a necessity since the pictorial sense, so slowly and painfully acquired, becomes of paramount importance with the new medium. The use of this sense, by making the camera a real " notebook " for the cine camera, will give ample justification. Ordinary shots, both exterior and interior, of possible settings and backgrounds for film work should be neatly filed with full explanatory notes, and used for reference when subsequent scenes and settings are discussed. A further use lies in the formation of a " casting " book in which are filed pictures and details of all who are likely to be needed for any production. This book should be kept up to date by comments on the actors'

competence or otherwise in any film in which he or she may have appeared.

"Stills" are also useful to rush through in order to confirm the setting and lighting values of any scene. Their use for art titles must not be overlooked.

The writer, with a wide experience of amateur clubs both private and public, is never tired of insisting that as many people as possible be given a job of some sort on the production. This keeps everyone happy, and the ordaining of a "still" photographer will utilise yet another spare member, and give him the correct sense of importance in the scheme of things that he needs to keep him enthusiastic the whole time.

The taking of stills during the actual filming of a play serves, however, a multitude of far more important duties. Enlargements from sub-standard cine films are not, for reasons well known to all photographers, the best obtainable, and the straightforward photograph, even if specially posed, is essential if records of any particular dresses, make-up or scenes are to be preserved in a state which does not mean running through umpteen feet of film to find. The vanity of most folk engaged in the production will be tickled by the possession of such photographs, and any such presentations to them which, by their action, smooth the sometimes gritty wheels of production, are to be highly valued!

We now have three definite records which the camera will compile for our cine requirements.

(1) A book of locations, (2) a casting book, and (3) a reference book of scenes and dresses, etc., for the use of producers and directors. Further uses for stills are suggested by the cinema display boards to be seen in any town. When you have your own club show, or even the family screening, why not take another leaf from the professional book, and tickle the palate of your audience with the *apéritif* of advance views?

The editors of most local papers are disposed to lend a sympathetic eye to reports of amateur cine activities and showings, and they will more than welcome a good illustration of the epic points of the film shown. These pictures have a very good pulling or "box office" power should your show be open to the general public. The financial chief of the production should always bear in mind that even the national daily papers are prepared to pay for really interesting pictures, and this point alone will often justify the constant use of a still camera during cine filming.

CHAPTER XVI

AMATEUR TALKIES—AN IDEA

It is, of course, possible for the well-off amateur cinematographer, or the flourishing cine club, to purchase one of the new home talkie sets ; at present, these are confined to sound on disc, but any day may see the advent of the normal sound on film. In fact this latter will undoubtedly be the final outcome in the amateur world, even as it is in the professional to-day.

For the average man or club, we will wash out the idea of obtaining such an outfit, it is a pity, but in these days of grace the finance side of one's hobby looms large on the horizon. Talking pictures in the home, however, have such a definite appeal that it behoves one to consider just how they may be made at reasonable cost. Two methods are suggested and, though the writer cannot think of any other proved and practical way, it is possible that reading these suggestions may start the train of thought in other minds, some of which may find fruition in acceptable and useful schemes for obtaining home talkies without imposing too great a strain on general funds.

SUGGESTION NO 1

The most obvious way is to have the players perform a set drama or comedy of not more than two hundred feet or so. All lines must be spoken plainly during the shooting, and the whole playlet so thoroughly rehearsed that very few sessions are needed to complete it. In screening it is but necessary to curtain off the screen fully and have the players repeat their lines during projection. Should it be desired to further create the illusion of mechanical reproduction, a cheap microphone, costing under 10s., can be connected up to a loud-speaker by any competent wireless maniac, and the speech thus given the needed (?) distortion. Alternatively, a loud-speaker placed conspicuously before the screen and a little aid from behind by means of a loudly humming electric fan will reproduce quite a good illusion.

The above suggestion is so perfectly obvious that the average reader will wonder at the writer's temerity in putting it forth. True, it *is* a most obvious method of manufacturing home talkies, but how many who have thought of it have *tried* it? They think it too simple and so let pass a perfectly good method which is capable of giving surprisingly good results; try it for your next film. There are many suitable playlets—dramatic, operatic and humorous—all capable of being adapted to this home process. Only one pointer to bear in mind: keep it short and “snappy”; the vocal efforts behind the screen are surprisingly tiring to amateurs!

SUGGESTION NO 2

Suggestion number two is claimed by the writer to be both original and unique.

Talkies are often made by adding the talk after the filming is completed. The suggested method is a complete reversal of this procedure. A *perfect* home talkie can be made by selecting a gramophone record of the "playlet" type and *filming a picture to fit the dialogue!* Any leading gramophone company has several such records, grave and gay, on its lists. These last, on a 12-inch disc, about four minutes, comparable to the running time of 100 feet of 16-mm. film.

Plenty of scope for amateur ingenuity is at once very apparent. The assembly of the cast, the learning of one's part from the record (Linguaphone students will score here!), the devising of the necessary action to fit the dialogue (so much easier than in reverse order!) and, finally, contriving a suitable background for the action. The whole effort must be run through in one session if possible, and the players repeat the lines in time with the gramophone. The new super-sensitive Panchromatic film enables the filming to be done indoors during the winter evenings, and a simple system of cues for synchronisation can easily be devised to assist the ultimate projection.

A very simple "practice" talkie may be made by purchasing a ten-inch disc of a song duet, dressing up the needed players, finding a suitable balcony background for the set, and filming as suggested.

The resulting effort will both please and mystify any of the audience not in the know—imagine mother puzzling over why it was that she never noticed that Lucy's voice so resembled that of Galli Curci !

A "fake" orchestral, piano or violin sound picture, a demonstration tango, dramatic or humorous recitations, etc., etc., can all be made with the normal expenditure of film plus the extra two or three shillings cost of the gramophone record. Further scope lies in the photographic interpretation of one's favourite orchestral records by filming suitable scenes, etc. What a magnificent setting one could give to Wagner's "Forest Murmurs," the lazy woods, rays of sunshine, gently flowing brooks and the heaping cascades to be found in any county !

The methods here suggested for obtaining home talkies of films actually made by amateurs are applicable, of course, to users of both the 9-mm. and 16-mm. films, and even to those few who still cling to the full-size professional film.

CHAPTER XVII

CUTTING THE COST OF FILMING

THIS chapter endeavours to bring the cine worker down to earth and give him some idea and indication of the practical value of his hobby. As is stated, everyone is interested in films, and a big move is at present on foot to make greater use of films for publicity and educative purposes. Amateur theatrical societies, natural history clubs, schools—all offer scope to the worker with ideas and the necessary skill to present them in an acceptable manner. It is always wise to “sound” a prospective film purchaser *before* the film is made, otherwise one might be landed with a sort of black and white elephant—unless the film happened to be of general interest.

It has been suggested at a meeting of the Professional Photographers' Association that the professional charges for sub-standard cine work should be: “For a chance shot, 15s. to 21s. Other and commercial work ranging from £2 2s. up to £4 4s. per one hundred feet.”

Charges, of course, must depend upon the time, nature and difficulty of the job, and the amateur should consider it a point of honour not to under-quote these suggested charges, as the saying goes,

one gets "Nothing for nothing, and precious little for sixpence!"

From the beginning of summer and onwards, sometimes even well into the winter, the correspondence columns of the popular and serious photographic Press are enlivened by a snowball series of howls from the users of sub-standard cameras.

These letters, from folks who declare that their hobby and pastime of movie-making is curtailed by the exorbitant cost of the sub-standard films, have had, and will have, but little effect upon the makers of the film. In these days of so very keen competition the manufacturer who could profitably reduce his prices would—there is no doubt of that.

A brief survey of the situation reveals the easily seen fact that the cost of sub-standard film not only limits the activities of many movie camera owners, but seriously limits the number of people owning such cameras. (This point strengthens the above statement *re* makers reducing prices if possible.) On the contrary, the number of projector owners is legion.

Therefore, until a wave of national prosperity so enlivens the sale of films and cameras, or new methods of manufacture enable the makers to reduce prices, owners of home movie cameras must put up with the cost of film and determine to run the apparatus as economically as possible.

The obvious ways of economy lie, of course, in expert handling of the camera, in elimination of unnecessary shots, the limiting of footage to

various scenes and titles, etc., etc. The not quite so obvious ways of cost reduction come to light when thought is applied to the subject and the resultant ideas put into practice.

Despite the most careful and economical handling of the camera, the expense of filming will remain, for the average purse, fairly high. The only way to reduce this is to make the camera earn its keep.

The means of accomplishing this are many and varied, for instance, in the summer (or what passes for it) many owners of projectors would more than welcome a film taken on one of their days in the garden, on the river, tea fight, or race meeting, etc., would cheerfully invite the camera owner to such an affair and pay well for the completed picture.

Many special events at the houses of the great and/or wealthy would produce quite good profits, an eye kept on the local paper will inform one of the people, place and time. The novelty of the idea will appeal greatly to the host and the odds are that interested guests who happen to be well featured in the film will become desirous of copies. There is, of course, always the possibility of a fair return from the sale of passable "stills" from these films.

Again, many business houses would respond to the suggestion that a film be made of one or more of their processes, a view of their offices and factories, etc. One can quite anticipate that the big boss of the place has a projector of his own, and a few feet exposed whilst he deals with

big business in the office will flatter his vanity and prove a sure seller, bringing relatively large profits to the enterprising camera man.

If the big boss hasn't a projector, maybe your suggestion of a film will interest him. Now here is profit for you if you can tie up with the local dealer and pull off a few sales. By the way, you need have no hesitation or doubt when pushing forth the idea of making a film, whether it be to police, business or professional men, military or drapers—*everyone* is interested in films, and it's a subject you know, or you'd not be keen on it !

Have you explored the possibilities of your own camera and projector combined when you hunt the elusive £ s. d. ? Can you see profit in taking a few feet of the crowd fighting to get into Blanks the Drapers at sale time, fixing up the film as a continuous band, adapting the projector and hiring it, with the film and screen to Mr. Blank for a while ? Tell Blank to display it in a window suitably equipped with peep-holes to view. If you let the crowd see you take the film, Blank's publicity is assured as is a handsome recompense for you !

A little thing will produce a flood of such really workable ideas. Here are a few suggestions which can be followed up, and which will doubtless suggest other and better things to do.

A film of the local M.P. spouting at an open-air meeting will be a sure seller to him (idea, keep the camera busy during elections !) Attend weddings, funerals (be careful here), and the local Chief of Police reviewing the constabulary. The

fire brigade put up a good show at times and there are always local processions, fêtes, etc. You may be sure that one or the other of the leading lights of these kindred affairs has a projector, in any case it is well worth asking.

Have you a Territorial camp near you this summer? If so, interview the C.O., get shots of the Church Parade, the Field Day, Sports Day and the grand inspection by the visiting General. Secure a few feet of kit inspections, potato peelers, etc., in fact cover every aspect of camp life, not forgetting humour whenever possible. Edit this carefully and produce the finished film showing the life of a soldier at camp. You are certain of selling this to the Commanding Officer as a recruiting film. Odd bits such as the top company changing guard, etc., can be sold to the various platoons. Any good "stills" you can show will sell like wild-fire to the troops.

Furthermore, you are almost certain to be commissioned to project the film at various times—usually at dinners, suppers and dances. Rather nice, isn't it—a jolly army "do" and ten or twenty shillings in your pocket afterwards!

And the result of all these efforts? Why, greater skill in your movie camera craft, better ability in seeing pictures that tell, and last, but not least, a very substantial cash balance to help your own movie expenses.

Of the friends you will meet, of the good times you will have, of your greater interests and joy of living, on these items one can put no price.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE amateur cinematographer has not been blessed, in the past, with too many textbooks. This serious defect is being rapidly corrected as the craft grows daily stronger. If the reader were to see the daily output of cine cameras and projectors by any of the leading manufacturers, he would realise the increasing appeal to the home user of what, until the advent of sub-standard film, was restricted to the professional or wealthy amateur.

The following pages give the title, author and price of many textbooks, the majority of which are for the professional. They are included for the sake of completeness and in order that the amateur who is seriously bitten may be able to assess which of the more serious works he needs. There is much to be learned from a study of these professional works, which can usually be seen in the libraries of most amateur cine clubs.

Those written expressly for the amateur are titled as such. A point to be noted is that many of the books listed are American publications and, if ordered from photographic booksellers, some little time must inevitably elapse before delivery. A certain number are, however, available on demand from photographic dealers and booksellers, and a study of cinematographic literature will disclose these gentry.

TEXTBOOKS

<i>Amateur Cinematography</i> (Wheeler) ..	6/-
<i>Amateur Cinematograph Handbook</i> (Dykes)	\$1.50
<i>Amateur Movie Craft</i> (Cameron)	7/6
<i>Amateur Movie Making</i> (McKay)	15/-
<i>Amateur Talking Pictures</i> (Brown) ..	5/-
<i>Animated Cartoons</i> (Lutz)	15/-
<i>Anatomy of Motion Picture Art</i> (Elliot) ..	6/-
<i>Cine-Photography for Amateurs</i> (Reyner) ..	10/6
<i>Cinematography for Amateurs</i> (Hobbs) ..	1/6
<i>Commercial Cinematography</i> (Sewell) ..	7/6
<i>Film Play Production for Amateurs</i> (Sewell)	5/-
<i>Fundamentals of Screen Negative Making</i> (Smith and Turner)	2/-
<i>Guide to Kinematography ; Projection</i> (Ben- nett)	10/6
<i>Handbook of Motion Picture Photography</i> (McKay)	15/-
<i>Junior Scenarios</i> (Eastman Kodak Co.) ..	\$1.50
<i>Kinematograph Studio Technique</i> (MacBean)	2/6
<i>Motion Picture Cameraman</i> (Lutz) ..	10/6
<i>Motion Pictures with the Baby Cine</i> (Abbott)	2/6
<i>Motion Picture Directory</i> (Milne)	15/-
<i>Motion Picture Photography</i> (Gregory) ..	30/-
<i>Motion Picture Photography for the Amateur</i> (McKay)	12/6
<i>Motion Picture Production</i> (Cameron) ..	30/-
<i>Motion Picture Projection</i> (Sloane) ..	25/-
<i>Moving Pictures. How Made and Worked</i> (Talbot)	10/6
<i>On Film Technique</i> (Pudovkin)	6/-

<i>Popular Cinematography</i> (Langlands)	..	3/6
<i>Photoplay Writing</i> (Wright)	.. ..	15/-
<i>Pictorial Beauty on the Screen</i> (Freeburg)		
<i>Scenario Writing and Producing for the</i> <i>Amateurs</i> (Gleason)	.. ..	15/-
<i>Screen Acting</i> (Klumph)	.. ..	15/-
<i>Taking and Showing of Motion Pictures for</i> <i>the Amateur</i> (Cameron)	.. ..	15/-
<i>The Film Till Now</i> (Rotha)	.. ..	15/-
<i>The Improvised Stage</i> (Somerscales)	..	5/-

This last book, whilst intended primarily for the amateur dramatist and playwright, is a masterpiece of ingenious ideas and is supremely useful to the film producer who is limited in finance but desires to produce a costume film.

ANNUALS

<i>American Annual of Photography</i>	.. ..	\$1.50
Contains cine section.		
<i>British Journal Photographic Almanac</i>	..	2/-
Contains cine section and reviews of apparatus, etc.		
<i>Cinematographic Annual</i>	.. ..	25/-
Publication of American Cinematographers' Society (Hollywood). Contains extensive amateur cine section, and the whole is useful.		

MAGAZINES (BRITISH)

<i>Amateur Photographer and Cinematographer</i> (Weekly)	.. ..	3d.
Contains a weekly cine section of great diversity.		

British Journal of Photography (Weekly) .. 3d.

Has a fortnightly section on amateur cine work and occasional additional articles on the subject.

Cinema Quarterly (Quarterly) 2/-

Excellent generally. Has very sound amateur section.

The Cinema (Weekly) 3d.

Trade publication, an occasional article appears of interest to amateurs. Professional articles of high interest.

The Camera and Amateur Cinematographer

(Monthly) 6d.

A very bright journal, devoting extensive space to cine work.

Close-Up (Monthly) 1/-

Covers the field generally.

Era (Weekly) 3d.

Stage publication, but has section for amateur cine workers and organises film competitions from time to time.

Home Movies and Talkies (Monthly) .. 6d.

A newcomer to amateur cine journalism. Is entirely devoted to the subject, which is capably treated from all angles.

The Kodak Magazine (Monthly) 2d.

Published by the makers of cine gear and contains very much useful advice.

Kinematograph Weekly (Weekly) 1/-

The *première* film trade journal. Of great interest to amateurs on this score alone. Has some articles definitely for the cine amateur.

The Photographic Journal (Monthly) .. 2/6

Official journal of the Royal Photographic Society, which has a cine section. Consequently the journal contains useful items.

The Screen (Monthly) 6d.

Entirely for the amateur cine man.

Snapshots (Monthly) 2d.

Contains a section which cine workers will find useful.

MAGAZINES (AMERICAN)

The majority of these magazines can only be obtained by annual subscription, although it is possible to obtain single copies from importers of photographic books. Some editors will send a specimen copy on request. A visit to the library of a cine club or photographic society, or the Royal Photographic Society of London, is recommended. Specimen copies of recent issues can then be inspected and their value to the individual worker assessed by him. As in the case of textbooks, the prices vary with the rate of exchange, which should be ascertained before ordering.

American Cinematographer (Monthly) .. 1/3

Journal of American Cinematographers' Society. Of high interest professionally and carries an extensive amateur section.

American Photography (Monthly) 16/-
(per annum)

The leading American journal of photography. Prints articles for, and has extensive section devoted to amateur work.

The Camera (Monthly) 12/6
(per annum)

Carries a good cine section.

Journal of Biological Photographic Association (Quarterly) 2/-

Mainly medical and biological, but carries articles of high interest on the various uses of substandard cine cameras and projectors.

Journal of Society of Motion Picture Engineers (Monthly) £3
(per annum)

The official journal of the society. Of interest only to those studying the development of cine work as a science.

Movie Makers (Monthly) 17/6
(per annum)

Official journal of the Amateur Cinema League of New York. Has world-wide interests and is entirely devoted to the amateur. Is well worth an investment.

“No other than a moving row
of magic shadow shapes that come and go . . .”

INDEX

AMATEUR films, 42
Apparatus, care of, 7

BIBLIOGRAPHY, 99

CAMERA, cine, 2
Casting book, 88
Charges for film work, 94
Chess, film of, 73, 82
Cinema manager, 15, 20
Cine-micrography, 84
Cutting cost of filming, 94

DECORATIONS, 32

EDITING, 60
Effects, 19, 36, 41
Exposure, 49

FILM, 4
Film, manufacture of, 10
Film, screening of, 13

LIGHT and Colour, Table of, 35
Lighting units, 7
Limitations, 43

MAKING the movie, 54
Models, 79

Mood music, 38
Music, 36

NOVELTY films, 81

OPTICAL printing, 43

PLOTS, 63
Projectors, 5
Public showings, 23, 25
Publicity, 28, 89

RECORDS, use of, 40
Rehearsals, 17
Rewinder, 7

SCENARIOS, 63, 67
Scenario, summary of, 62
Screen, 6
Script, the, 50
Silhouette films, 77
Simple films, 45
Still camera, use of, 87

TALKIES, 81, 90
Title, the, 57
Toy theatre, 78
Tripod stand, 4

WHAT to film, 72

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
MACKAYS LIMITED, CHATHAM

